new masses

DECEMBER 3, 1946 VOLUME LXI NUMBER 10
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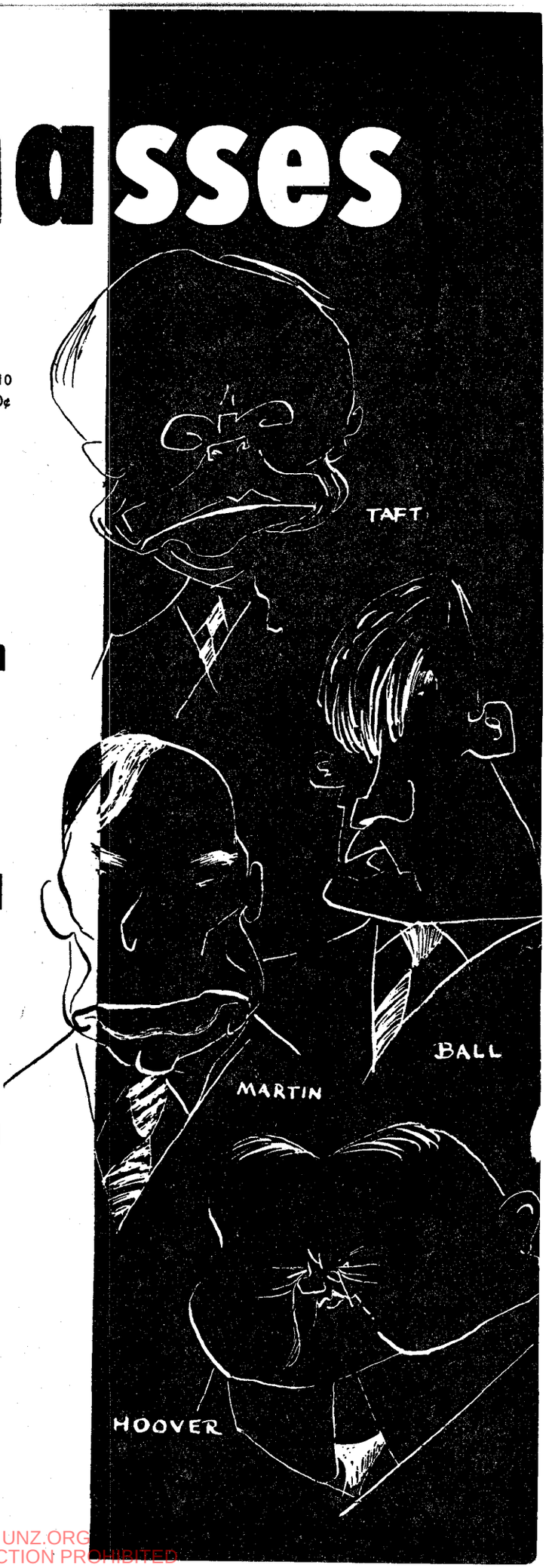

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just a minute

IN HIS article "A World 'Christian Front'?" in last week's issue, V. J. Jerome noted that: "The high moral pretensions of the Vatican and the hierarchy have found and continue to find their fullest fruition in falangist Spain—the remaining Axis confederate in crime against humanity."

And John Stuart in reporting on the UN described the Anglo-American maneuvers to shield Franco. He declared that this diplomatic duplicity "can only be brought to an end by the widest and most relentless pressure on America's UN officialdom. Spain must be torn from the hands of the Nazi spy and returned to her people."

A sign of the times is the renewed activity, especially in New York, in support of the Spanish Republicans. The fight against Franco, "the remaining Axis confederate" at large—and in power—must once again have a prominent place on the agenda for action of labor and progressive groups in all parts of the country. The National Committee to Win the Peace, with *Brig. Gen. Evans F. Carlson, USMCR* (ret.) and Paul Robeson as co-chairman, has launched a nationwide anti-Franco drive through its forty local committees. NM readers are asked to enlist in this campaign and, where no local committee now exists, to help organize one. Information and direction can be secured from the committee at 23 West 26th Street, New York 10, N. Y.

The New York committee, at a recent waterfront demonstration which was held jointly with the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, pledged to picket every Spanish ship that docks in the metropolitan port area. While waiting in readiness for the Spanish ship, *SS Marquess de Comillas*, scheduled to dock here November 19, the committee was informed by Spanish Lines that the ship was delayed by "bad weather." The inclement elements turned out to be a twenty-four-hour anti-Franco strike against the vessel by Havana's stevedores. But the port of New York, it seems, will be no haven from anti-fascist storms.

Aid to the fighters for Spanish democracy is seen as an equally important part of the anti-Franco movement. A Christmas campaign for relief and rehabilitation of Spanish Republican refugees has been announced by Dorothy Parker, chairman of the Spanish Refugee Appeal. The drive will be climaxed by a "Christmas Salute" at Madison Square Garden, December 16. Participants will include UN delegates from France, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and various South American countries.

Welcoming this campaign Dr. Jose Giral, Premier of the Spanish Republican government-in-exile, wrote: "The Spanish Republican government greatly appreciates the aid and assistance given it by many democratic groups in the United States, among them the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee, in many ways and especially in the collection of funds to help our suffering people.

"Our government appeals to all to continue this task with greater effort than ever, for the needs are greater than ever and action within and outside Spain increase daily. To this effect our government is ready to receive and distribute all the resources that you can collect.

"The days have passed when statements of compassion and encouragement sufficed. We need the cooperation of all democrats in the final effort to overthrow the fascist tyranny which oppresses Spain. We are certain they will not fail us."

We urge your full support to the Spanish Refugee Appeal, 192 Lexington Avenue, New York 16, N. Y.

L. L. B.

ANDREI Y. VISHINSKY, vice-minister for foreign affairs of the USSR and delegate to the UN, will be one of the principal speakers at the "Get Together With Russia" rally December 2 at Madison Square Garden.

Sponsored by the National Council of American Soviet Friendship, the meeting will celebrate the thirteenth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the US and the Soviet Union.

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ZOLA: THE HONOR OF FRANCE

In him they prosecuted the artist's right to judge, to proclaim the truth — a right which is assailed when the writer is warned: "No politics!"

By LOUIS ARAGON

Paris, by mail.

AFTER the storm, men usually go out to see what has remained standing in their orchards. And when the storm of war has passed, we people of France are in the habit of taking stock of our glories, of rearranging a little the history of our loftiest ideas in line with history itself. Thus our literature seems to have seasons separated by the thunder of cannon. The War of 1870 was a watershed date in the century which really began in 1815, when Napoleon fell; and 1914 also seems to have closed a long chapter of novels and poems. Today we speak of a literature between wars; and as I write, there is much talk of the beginning of a new era in writing.

Nothing, however, explains these classifications which are based on new or different works. It would not be difficult to show how artificial these cleavages are. Yet the human mind seems to find it necessary to think in such terms. Apparently the very ones who think that literature, art and thought are independent of events, detached from everyday life, acknowledge, by the chronological approach they generally use, that history takes precedence over literary history, that in reality nothing written, sung, thought or painted is unaffected by the brutal history common to all men.

That is why, in the orchard of France, in the midst of ravages such as it has never known, we feel more than ever duty-bound to point out that the great French figures remain standing. Their staunchness in the face of the most violent winds is a pledge of our future. That is why the almost ritual regularity of the pilgrimage to Medan, to the spot where Emile Zola lived and died, takes on the character of a precious testimonial, a national testimonial. It attests to the vitality of both Zola's works and those ideas which found in him their most striking interpreter at a moment in world history and in the history of our country when those forces which we have just swept away, together with the foreign invader, raised their heads in France.

So we must not be surprised if that great conspiracy of stupidity and hatred which surrounded the life of Emile Zola has not disarmed. Nor that the name of Zola is still, after almost half a century and in quite a special way, the object of passion, injustice, insults and curses, as though the man were still alive. In this country there is a caste of madmen who go about foaming at the mouth, uttering big words that belong to everybody yet which they claim as their exclusive monopoly. We saw this caste, when the Germans invaded our land, mouth the same usurped words—"honor," "traditions" and "fatherland"—as they became the vile accomplices of the foreign looters and hangmen. This caste, hard put to hide behind a purely verbal nationalism the defense of interests that know no boundaries save those of their bank accounts, this caste whose threats and clamor were unable to silence Emile Zola, this caste today—believe me—writhes at the very mention of the great man's name.

IN A recent book devoted to the master of Medan, the author, with the best intentions in the world, asserts that he means to deal with Zola without pausing to consider "subdued passions which are now nothing but dead passions." No doubt he has rarely had occasion to talk to members of the caste I have mentioned. Had he done so, he would have found out that the same passions provoked by the notorious Esterhazy *bordereau* (memorandum) are far from dead.

Of course, we must understand this in a somewhat broader sense: we will never speak in a valid way of Zola if we seek to separate him from what constitutes his greatness, linking him with the history of our people. The illusion that it is possible to consider Zola apart from politics is frankly an illusion which profits only those who were and have remained enemies of Zola. It is an illusion that aids the very caste which, from General de Pellieux down to Marshal Petain, has always denounced the policies of the nation in order to impose its own dictatorship. How like our contemporary fascists—members of the French Legion of Volunteers and Darnand's S.S. men—were all those creatures of high society involved in the Dreyfus Case, the veiled woman and the forgers on the General Staff, all of them curious figures like Major Esterhazy himself! The resemblance of that world with the world of Vichy should be enough to show that it is in the interests of that caste, but not in the interests of France, to have people forget the circumstances surrounding Zola's works, glossing over them as regrettable passions now happily dead, as political dross. We, the

Louis Aragon.

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French people, are the heirs of Zola, of all of Zola, and we mean to read, study, and understand him without emasculating him.

On Feb. 12, 1898, testifying at the trial of the author of the Rougon-Macquart series instituted by the War Ministry, Jean Jaures declared: "In him they indict the man who has insisted on a rational and scientific interpretation of miracles; in him they indict the man who, in *Germinal*, foresaw the unfolding of a new humanity, the blossoming of the wretched proletariat rising from the depths of suffering toward the sun; in him they indict the man who has just shaken the dangerous and arrogant General Staff out of its irresponsibility in which all the disasters of our fatherland were unconsciously being prepared. . . ." Oh, what a fine frenzy, what strident protests these words evoked! Jaures, the Jaures *they* were to assassinate sixteen years later (just as not so long ago they assassinated the Dreyfusard, Victor Basch), Jaures dared to say that the disasters of the fatherland were being prepared in the little offices of those incompetent "brass hats!"

The history of France has shown that its disasters were not always unconsciously prepared, as the generous-hearted Jaures asserted. But Jaures was right: it was not only because of his *J'Accuse* that Zola was placed on trial; it was because *J'Accuse* was the crown, the logical culmination, the natural evolution of all his work. Yes, they prosecuted him for *Germinal*, for *Lourdes* and for *La Debacle*, that book which still fills the men of the 1940 debacle with virtuous indignation!

Jaures was right. Technically, Zola was on trial for having made charges against Casimir Perier, President of the French Republic. But in reality he was on trial because he had accused an entire caste — and with all the authority of his great writings which are an indictment of that caste. By prosecuting Emile Zola, the writer, they prosecuted realism in literature. In him they prosecuted the writer's right to judge, to proclaim the truth, to call things by their right names. And, consciously or not, it is this right that is called into question and assailed when one says to the writer: *no politics!* when one wishes to extract from his works an Emile Zola in bronze or marble, whose muffled passions are now only dead passions.

There is an "appeasement" policy with regard to Zola's life, work and example. For fifty years our Republic has kept in the shadow certain things that are improper, "not nice"; thus our school-children find in their history textbooks three evasive lines on the Paris Commune and see the Dreyfus Case referred to as one of those regrettable episodes in which Frenchmen did not love one another. How absurd this ostrich-like policy of treating history is—this hyper-timidity of ignoramuses! We have just seen what it leads to: to Petain, Vichy, Darnand! For fifty years we have been blackmailed by the out-and-out reactionaries. The men like Charles Maurras who marked out Jaures for assassination in 1914 handed over all our patriots to the Gestapo from 1940 to 1944. They have terrorized our society, forbidding it to speak of the Dreyfus Case. But during this entire period they have not slackened, on the moral as well as the literary plane, the campaigns which saddened and darkened the last years of Zola's life. Those who dare to defend Zola, however, speak of him in a spirit of "appeasement": they cast a veil over the man who cried out to the jury about to condemn him: "I have not wished my country to persist in a lie and an injustice. You can punish me here. One day France will thank me for having saved her honor." They think they are acting wisely by separating the political from the literary. So during this period, the documents of the trial having disappeared, the men of lies and injustices have had an easy job of winning, both literarily and politically.

Do not say that I exaggerate, and that in the France of 1946 Zola occupies the position he deserves. That is not true—far from it. At the end of his life, having already given to France the great works which bore the name of France together with his own throughout the world, Zola was twice unjustly condemned. He was expelled from the Legion of Honor, as if he had never written *La Terre*, *Nana*, *Pot-Bouille* and *Germinal*. He had to go as an exile to England. Read everything he wrote on his return to France: read his letters to successive presidents of the Republic, his appeals to France which are almost the last cries of the living Zola: "We have been promised, in compensation, the justice of history. It's a little bit like the Catholic paradise, which teaches patience on this earth to the wretched dupes gripped by hunger. . . . As for myself, I wish and hope that history's revenge will be more serious than the delights of paradise. But a little justice would have given me pleasure. . . ."

The end of Zola's life was one of the saddest pages of our history. The man who represented the French people's love of justice did not receive justice. Convicted in February 1898, Zola was forced to leave France on the eighteenth of July of that same year. ("July 18, 1898 will remain the most terrible date of my life, the one on which I bled with all my blood.") Less than two months later, on August 31, Colonel Henry, after confessing that he was the author of the forgery with which Dreyfus had been charged, committed suicide in his cell at Mont-Valerien. In June 1899, when Zola returned to France, the technical convictions against him were not quashed nor was he readmitted to the Legion of Honor. Dreyfus also returned to France in August 1899, almost a year after Colonel Henry's confession. On September 9, a court-martial again convicted him and Zola wrote: "I am horror-stricken. It is no longer anger, avenging indignation, the need to expose the crime and demand punishment in the name of truth and justice; it is horror, the sacred terror of the man who sees the impossible happen, rivers flow back to their source, earth rush toward the sun. And what I cry out is distress for our generous and noble France, fright at the abyss into which she is plunging."

He could not forsee the monstrous subtlety with which the forgers and accomplices were to complete a parody of justice: the amnesty law passed fifteen months later which, with ignoble generosity, treated innocent men as pardoned guilty ones. Emile Zola was fated to live only two months more. "But a little justice would have given me pleasure. . . ." A tragic phrase which remained without an answer.

But we who have seen Hitler in Paris, and the lie proclaimed truth by a marshal of France, sublime patriotism a crime, and treason a virtue—are we then unable to understand Zola's horror in the summer of 1899? As we read the proceedings of Zola's trial, how can we fail to recognize in that vicious audience in the Paris courtroom, whose

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murmurs, shouts and laughs at every word of Zola and his defenders were unspeakably shameful, that audience we saw but yesterday at the trial of Petain and the traitorous admirals freely expressing its solidarity with the man of Montoire* and the assassins of our fleet? When he spoke of fright at the abyss into which France was plunging, could Zola even imagine the depths of the abyss into which we hurtled? And like him, we ask for a little justice.

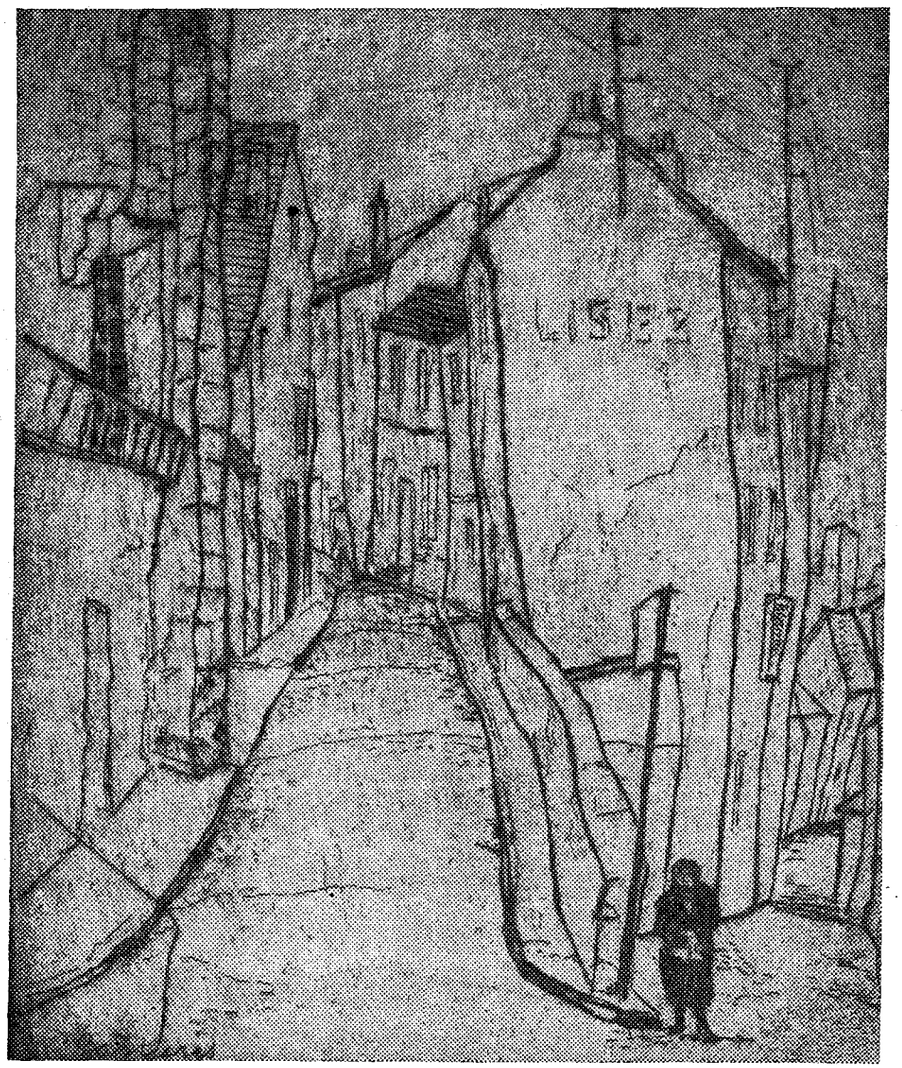
WELL, the dead Zola is still waiting. Certain people are ready to give him his literary due; others even refuse him that. But in the schools they do not teach truth, which is the only justice. And the truth is summed up in a few words: at the end of the nineteenth century, a parasitic caste having seized upon our army and our honor, using forgeries, third-degree tortures and flagrant lies, compromised our dearest and purest possession, the image of France, in the eyes of the world. And a great writer named Emile Zola rose up: by his courage and self-sacrifice he saved France's honor.

About twenty years ago the first part of my book *Le Paysan de Paris* (The Peasant of Paris) appeared in a magazine. In that same issue a critic and bad novelist—he has since been elected to the French Academy—wrote an article in which he blasted Zola, accusing him with crushing disdain of being *vulgar*. In that same piece he covered me with bouquets. That made me write him a letter of such a nature that for years and years he no longer dared write my name. I am not bringing this up for my own sake but to point out that this gentleman who found Zola "vulgar" was in Switzerland while the Germans ruled France. And there—is it surprising?—for four years he collaborated with open agents, paid agents of Hitlerite Germany! Twenty years ago when his sallies at the expense of Zola won the applause of the fashionable drawing-rooms, things were not so clear. But in order to enter the Academy it was even then necessary to flatter the caste that hates Zola and hates the common people of France, no doubt finding them "vulgar."

I only mention this mediocre writer as a symbol. Today events have brought out in a thousand different ways the nature of the persistent struggle against a great writer, one of the glories of France. Has the hour of justice for Zola, which he never knew on this earth, finally sounded? We would like to think so. Nevertheless I repeat: to render justice to Zola does not mean to render him literary justice. What Zola waited for, what he is still waiting for, is the condemnation of those who condemned him, of those who came close to compromising the honor of France. And who cannot see how timely that is, how much living passion it demands, how much French conscience it represents, the will to continue the struggle, the struggle which began with *J'Accuse* and which our French fighters for freedom continued on our invaded soil from 1940 to 1944 against Vichy, against the caste of the Darquiers de Pelle-Poix and the Mayols de Luppe?* This is the meaning I should like to give to the commemoration of Zola's death. The only true justice that can be done to Emile Zola, expelled from the French Legion of Honor by men whose very names are today forgotten, is to continue the task undertaken by Zola, to draw strength from his example, to learn the lesson of man's never-ending struggle against darkness.

Emile Zola told us, in his testimony in the courtroom on Feb. 8, 1898, how every day he was insulted in the streets, his window-panes shattered. The kept press bespattered him with mud and treated him like a criminal. Zola spoke thus in the court to General de Pellieux: "I ask General de Pellieux if there are not different ways of serving France? One may serve her with the

* Scene of Hitler-Petain meeting in 1940 at which French-German "collaboration" was pledged. (*Translator's note.*)



Leo Tanenbaum.

* Notorious French fascists and anti-Semites. (*Translator's note.*)

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sword and with the pen. General de Pellieux has no doubt won great victories. I have mine! I bequeath to posterity the name of General de Pellieux and that of Emile Zola: it will choose!"

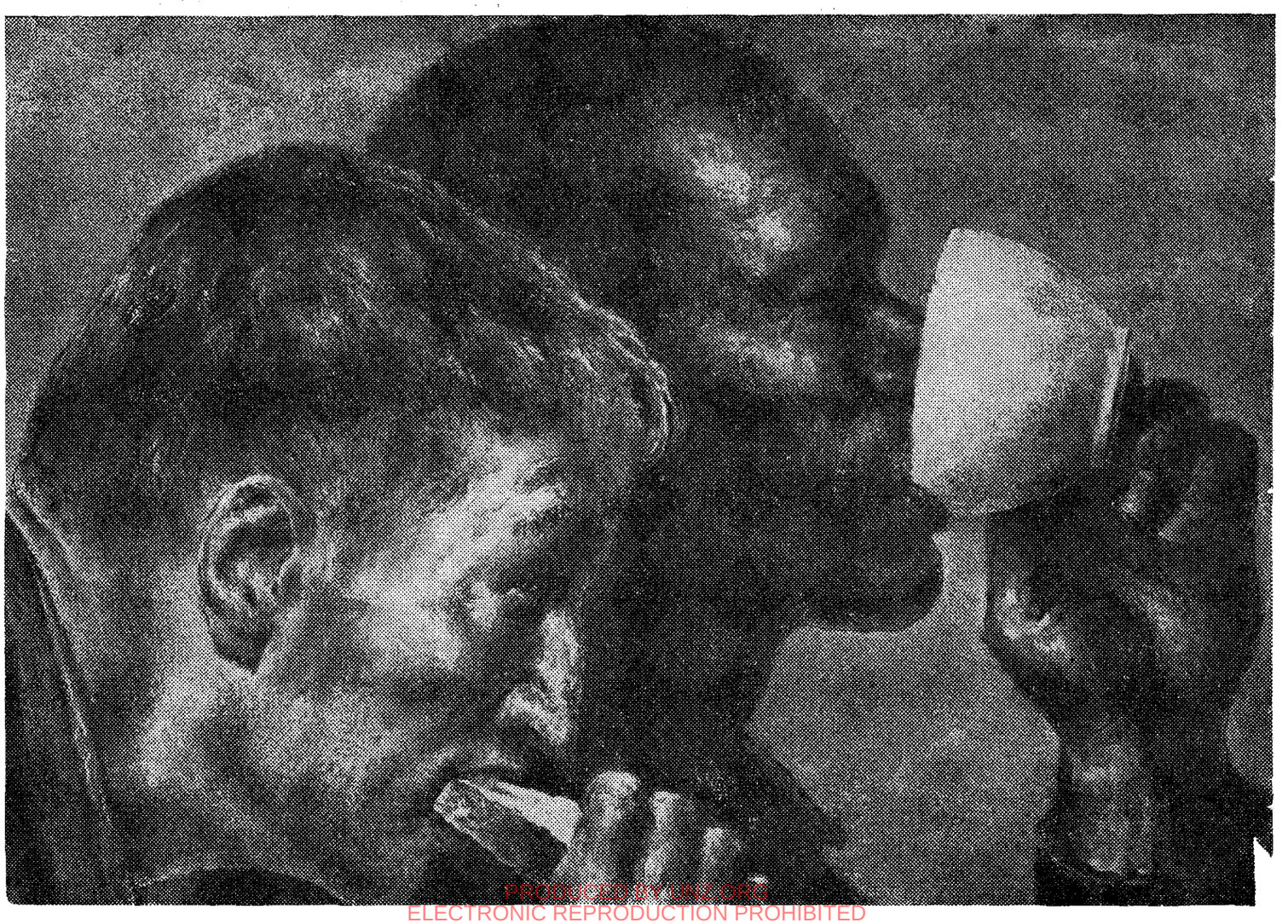
Zola's enemies called him an insulter of the army, a bad Frenchman. But as a professor of the *Ecole Polytechnique*, Edouard Grimaux, declared at his trial: "The insulters of the army are those who rush about the streets shouting: *Long live the Army!* without shouting: *Long live the Republic!* —two cries which cannot be separated. They are the ones who cry: *Long live the Army! Death to Zola! Death to the Jews!*"

THOSE words are still as meaningful today. Those who today seek to build a Pretorian army, the army of their caste, in opposition to the Republic, are the enemies of the Republic and of the army. Of necessity they are aligned with those who would have shouted: *Death to Zola!* and who not so long ago yelled: *Death to the Jews!* Nor was it an empty slogan.

Those who seek to undermine the Republic, even though they may be the most glamorous military leaders, are of necessity enemies of our national army, the French army which proved its strength and worth by driving the invader from our soil in a bitter four-year struggle. Even though yesterday they were on the side of France, now they are of necessity allies of the anti-Semites, the Vichy caste and the enemies of France. Not all in their ranks realize it—but let them take heed of this fatal downward path to treason. Recent examples that have occurred should fill them with dismay. There are not three sides to the barricades. There are no other parties save that of France or that of its hangmen, who raise their heads again so soon after their defeat. There is no other choice before us: with Zola for France or with Esterhazy, with Maurras, with Petain against France.

Some people may object to my formula, "with Zola for France," as being disjointed. Those are the ones who always try to separate the literary from the political and who now say: Zola is an esthete and France, even the Republic, has no esthetic. In the period of what he called "the experimental novel" Zola wrote: "There must be agreement between the social movement, which is the cause, and literary expression, which is the effect. If the Republic, blind to its own nature, not realizing that it exists by dint of a scientific formula, should ever persecute this scientific formula in literature, it would be a sign that the Republic is not ripe for the facts and that once again it must disappear before a single fact, dictatorship." Now as then we must stand with Zola, with realism—the right of the writer to judge, to tell the truth—if we wish to remain in the French camp against intellectual adventurism, against dictatorship. *There must be agreement between the social movement, which is the cause, and literary expression, which is the effect.* This is the striking truth which those who fish in troubled waters cannot tolerate. And they have redoubled their shouts these past months

"Banquet," lithograph by Joseph Hirsch. At the Associated American Artists Gallery through December 7.



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because this truth has been reaffirmed somewhat forcefully in the land of socialism.

No doubt it would have been pleasant to dwell on what is valuable and no longer valuable in the writings of Emile Zola. Perhaps I was expected to analyze the man's times and his personal genius; analyze the vocabulary of the Rougon-Macquart novels and the scientific concepts of their creator; oppose modern realism to naturalism; tell what we have learned and what Zola did not know; and so on down the line. Of course, Zola is the novelist of the second half of the nineteenth century and here we are almost midway in the twentieth. Of course, since he wrote his *Au Bonheur des Dames*, trusts have developed, just as airplanes came after the railroads. Of course, Zola has not said the last word in the field of the novel, any more than has Balzac.

Moreover, there is a left-wing criticism of Zola's novels which must not be confused with the squeals and insults of the reactionaries against this great writer. As I went along, I could have examined Zola in that light, pointing out the inadequacies of naturalism, what is outmoded in the concept of the experimental novel. As early as 1891, Paul Lafargue, one of the most remarkable minds of French socialism, discussed Zola's *Money* in this light and initiated the kind of critical examination history forces us to make. But Lafargue wrote his critique several years before the inner logic of his work gave Zola the definitive stamp by which we identify him. Calling the naturalists armchair writers, Lafargue asserted: "Can anyone imagine that Dante would have written his *Divine Comedy* if, like a good Philistine, he had shut himself up within four walls, indifferent to public affairs, and had not passionately participated in the struggles of his epoch?" Without knowing it, Lafargue was here praising the Zola as we now can praise him.

Today I base this praise on what Paul Lafargue could not know of Emile Zola in 1891. And many will tell me that it is for the author of *J'Accuse* and not the author of *Nana* and the *Human Beast*. I will be told that first of all and above all, Emile Zola is a great novelist, certainly the only French novelist whose name can be written down next to that of Balzac. I will be told that I should have spoken about Zola the writer. Those who say that have failed to understand me: for me, there is not the writer on the one hand and the political figure on the other. There is but one man—the man for whom I demand justice. To defend the Zola of the Dreyfus Case means to defend the entire evolution of his work, the whole development of his thought. Perhaps I might have limited myself to the stages of this development and dealt with Zola's novels one by one. But whether the enemies of enlightenment like it or not, are those novels not in the broad daylight of glory? What do they expect of me? What can I do for these books? They stand on their own. But to render justice, full justice, to Zola means not to discourse at length about his novels, not to analyze his books from a professor's podium. To do justice to Zola means to learn his lesson, to understand his example. It means to continue Zola, to continue France.

Translated by John Rossi.

DANGER ZONE IN GERMANY

An eye-witness account of the failure of American MG "denazification" policy.

By ROBERT PENNER

Robert Penner is the pseudonym of an American Army officer recently returned from Germany.

As I write the Council of Foreign Ministers may have begun its negotiations for a treaty with Germany. These talks are of direct and tremendous concern to me. They involve my whole future and the future of millions like me. For if the American government brings to these treaty discussions the same ideas it has been putting into practice in the American zone in Germany, my future is a shaky one indeed. It will not be a future of peace.

Since I have returned home I have continued reading the endless columns of print telling what the Americans are doing in Germany. I have read the stories in *Life*, *Time* and *Reader's Digest* on Military Government. To put it mildly these stories tell in a distorted way only a small part of what is going on. In such outfits as MG the easiest thing to detect are the incompetents and the corrupt. There are also honest men. But the fault does not lie with particular individuals. It lies in our policy. For in Germany we do have a policy, despite the talk that we have none. Our policy in essence is reactionary and part of the same world policy which alarms so many people in Europe and Asia.

Let me begin, nevertheless, by talking about MG's personnel. I agree that our personnel was and is inadequate both in numbers and ability. The men who enforce policy do not for the most part speak German. They know hardly anything of German history. Even if the excuse of redeployment is accepted to explain the poor personnel it still does not account for the failures of American occupation. And here is where policy comes in. It was not until July 1945 that a directive on denazification was finally issued. Except for some minor changes it is still operative. That directive excluded from public office only those who were members of the Nazi party before May 1, 1937. But the fact is that the books of the Nazi party were closed from 1933 until May of 1937. And when the books were opened Germans were standing in long lines waiting to join. These Germans, therefore, cannot claim that they were misled into joining, for by 1937 Nazi policy was absolutely clear. Furthermore, there was no pressure on them to join. Yet MG mechanically set the date of May, 1937, and cleared all those who joined the Nazi party after that date.

This made matters "easy" for MG officers but it also cleared many Nazis, particularly industrialists and important

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civil servants. Moreover, there were many who were so highly regarded by the Nazi party that they were not required to join the organization. They too were cleared. They were given a clean bill of health by MG and were thus permitted to hold important jobs. Let me give an example of the kind of Germans who were cleared. There was the man who presented himself to MG as a candidate to run a gas works. While the Nazis were in power he had been sent from Germany to Vienna to run a gas works there. But despite the fact that only a man trusted by the Germans would be sent out of the country, MG gave him a clean bill of health because he had no apparent organizational affiliations.

I could cite dozens of such cases where a lack of knowledge and a failure to dig deeper resulted in the placement of outright Nazis in high positions. Of course, there were anti-fascists who could have been given these positions. But these anti-fascists turned out to be former trade union leaders, former Socialists and Communists. MG officers brought their private prejudices into their decisions and turned these men down. In other words, where an individual's proven anti-fascism could have been the basis for a correct decision he was very often tossed aside because MG did not like his political outlook or his labor activities.

Naturally without a real orientation towards German anti-fascists there could be no real denazification. Nevertheless in May 1946, General Clay announced that "denazification was complete." He based this on facts and figures submitted to to him by subordinates. But no one ever checked these figures; if they had been checked it would have been quickly discovered that denazification was far from complete. There are Nazis in high posts and many of the Nazi "big shots" have slipped through MG. Fortunately a new denazification law was drafted by Heinrich Schmitt, the only Communist minister in the Bavarian cabinet. It was accepted by Gen. Lucius Clay. But its effectiveness was dependent on the men who administered it. Last July Schmitt was removed for "inefficiency," and a representative of the clerical-fascist Christian Social Union installed to put the law into force. In other words a fascist was to sit in judgment on other fascists. The utter bankruptcy of this approach soon revealed itself. A farce was made of the law

Bittner & Co.

"The Widow," woodcut by Kaethe Kollwitz (1923).

and General Clay gave its administrators sixty days in which to change matters. But if American policy were clearly and genuinely anti-fascist such blunders could not have taken place. It would not be necessary to denazify the denazifiers. They would not have been in authority in the first place.

SECRETARY BYRNES in his Stuttgart speech placed great emphasis on the progress made in the American zone "in turning the government back to the Germans." Let us examine whether we can be proud of this and just what we accomplished. Although political parties existed in the Soviet zone as early as May 1945, we didn't sanction parties until October 1945. But parties without meeting halls, office equipment, paper and ink, are very limited in what they can do. The real anti-fascists just out of concentration were, therefore, tremendously handicapped. To make sure their influence would be limited, we permitted only one newspaper, issued once a week on two small sheets, for each party for all Bavaria, and this was granted in December 1945. Not a single Marxist pamphlet was allowed publication in the first year of occupation. To hold a political meeting ten days' notice was required, and the request had to be submitted in five copies to the local government, the local MG and the tactical troops. Can you imagine a party trying under these circumstances to hold meetings to clarify issues and events? Further, the parties could not demonstrate or protest. No criticism of occupation policy could be voiced. To a certain extent these latter measures were needed for security against Nazi activities, but it worked out otherwise.

All German parties from right to left were opposed to holding elections in January 1946. They were overruled and in midwinter, with the anti-fascists still weak and mainly centered in the working class of the larger cities, elections were held in the rural areas. The parties had no cars or gas, and often permission to use trains was denied them. Lower echelon officers in MG did not see the election law until the last week in December. It did not get down to the villages until about January 6, twenty-one days before the election. And what did this "democratic" election law have to say? It said all who were members of the Nazi party after May 1, 1937, could vote and be candidates for office!

For twelve years the Nazis had all the benefits of state power while the anti-Nazis were persecuted and destroyed. Can anyone believe that this election procedure was a "blunder"? Or was it an attempt to weight the elections in such a manner that the "old regime" would win? The only organized "electoral" force in the villages was the church. The Christian Social Union had 150 members in the county in which I worked. They needed no apparatus when political speeches were made every Sunday from the pulpits. These are the facts behind the "democratic" landslide for the Christian Social Union. This is what our officials mean by "turning government back to the Germans." Many MG officers and correspondents strongly disagreed with this policy. Nevertheless, the same farce was repeated in April and May in other elections. Despite this, the Social Democrats polled over 30 percent of the vote on a zone-wide basis and the Communists about 10 percent. In the few cases where MG had appointed anti-fascist officials they were ousted in the voting and replaced by Nazis whom MG had cleared.

HOWEVER much we may have sinned in the denazification of the government, even this looks good

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when we turn to industry. Except for the individual efforts of a good officer here or there, very little was done. To make sure that no lieutenant or captain on a lower level upset the apple-cart, control of industry was centralized at top levels. For example, no local officer could touch a high Nazi in railroad or in the I. G. Farben trust. In key posts such as MG's Trade and Industry Section were men like Peter Hoagland of General Motors—and its German subsidiary Oppel Motors.

Under Hoagland's leadership the TIS bucked denazification consistently and effectively. If anyone wanted a Nazi director removed from Oppel the director was declared "indispensable." Finally a law was promulgated eliminating Nazis from supervisory positions in any plant, with the owner responsible for carrying out the law. It was not a bad law but no machinery was set up to police it. Various MG groups alternately claimed and disclaimed responsibility. Nothing was done and in the area where I worked not a single prosecution was begun during the six months that the law was in effect. Yet everyone knew that there were scores of violations. There was the Nazi plant director, for example, who had his status changed to that of "secretary," a non-supervisory function, and was thus able to run a factory as he did under Hitler. This could have been prevented if real denazification committees had been established among factory workers.

It is true that the Property Control Section of MG seized all Nazi organizational property and the holdings of some big Nazi industrialists who were party members. But in May 1946, the so-called democratically-elected local officials were given the function of administering Property Control. MG officers were out of the picture completely in a matter where we could hit the Nazis hardest—in their pocketbooks.

And how is MG handling German workers? Nothing was done in the way of trade union organization until September 1945. At an Allied conference the Soviet delegate could say that in the Soviet zone many workers were organized into trade unions while we could not report anything on the same scale. So the paper began to fly with MG demanding "statistics" on shop steward elections. In October 1945, trade unions were permitted and the workers began to organize. They were, however, not permitted to strike nor were they permitted to discuss questions of hours and wages. This reminded many a German worker of Hitler's labor organization.

Nor are we doing anything to denazify German youth poisoned by the Hitlerites—at least nothing on any large scale. The denazification policy permits Nazis to go on indoctrinating a new generation of German youth with racist ideas. School teachers without any reorientation away from the Nazi ideas they taught before are permitted to teach again. I know of specific cases where teachers are poisoning the minds of German children. MG knows it and Mr. Byrnes should know it too.

For example, I know of a German teacher who assigned a composition to ten-year-olds on "The Terror Bombardment of Our City by the Americans." Another Nazi teacher knew how to keep Nazi hatred alive by asking children to write on "The Most Frightening Experience I Have Had" —knowing full well that the children would write on Allied bombardment. Yet since November 1945, no local MG officer has been permitted near a German school and one officer is the whole education staff for eight million Bavarians. MG intelligence knows of scores of incidents such as I have just mentioned and yet they continue. The same old Nazi professors are teaching in the universities.

Some high Army officials have been proud of the fact that there have been few attacks on American soldiers. Why should there be more? Many Nazis feel that we are their buddies. When Churchill made his bid for an anti-Soviet war at Fulton, Missouri, American Army headquarters received many applications from former Wehrmacht and Luftwaffe officers who wanted to join the Americans in Mr. Churchill's war.

THIS is the story I have to tell and this is why I am worried about the future. When Secretary Byrnes made his recent speech at Stuttgart he was cheered by the German big-money men. They recognized his speech as one which would help them return to the saddle. They were no longer fearful of the Potsdam agreement. Those of them with whom I came in contact in the course of my duties praised Byrnes to the sky. "A fine man," one of them said to me. "I think we can count on his friendship." If it turns out this German is right, and the facts of the past year indicate that he is, we are heading for real trouble. The German monopolists do not worry in the least about a peace that will keep the Allies divided and disunited, a peace which runs contrary to the spirit of Potsdam.

Paris.

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SERGEI, THE YOUNGEST

"But of course that's not enough for you. So one fine day, no different from any other day, you suddenly jump out of the second-story window!"

From a novel by ALEXANDER FADEYEV

Illustrated by Alexander Dobkin.

The following is an excerpt from Chapter Twelve of Alexander Fadeyev's new novel, "The Young Guard," now published in the Soviet Union. The Young Guard was an organization of young people engaged in partisan activity against the German army. They operated out of the small Don Basin town of Krasnodon. Five members of the band were posthumously awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union.

This chapter begins with a telescoped account of the life of Sergei Tyulenin, which the author interpolates while Sergei sits on his sister Nadya's bed telling her of the band's work at Voroshilovgrad.

WHAT would you do, reader, if you had the heart of a lion, bursting with courage and daring, thirsting for heroic exploits, yet you were still a youngster, running around barefooted, the skin on your feet rough and chapped, and in everything, absolutely in everything that made your soul leap, you were completely misunderstood by the human race?

Serezhka Tyulenin was the baby of his family and he grew like the grass on the plains. His father, born and bred in Tula, left his home-town in search of a job when still a boy, and made his way to the Donets Basin where, in the course of forty years spent in the pits as a miner, he acquired those qualities of naivete, self-esteem and despotic pride characteristic of his trade—features distinctive of no other people to such an extent as of sailors and miners. Even after he ceased work altogether Gabriel Petrovich Tyulenin still considered himself to be lord and master in his house. Mornings he aroused everybody in the place because as an old miner it was second nature for him to be up and about when it was still dark—and because he was bored when alone. And even if he had not been bored, he would have awakened everybody just the same with his coughing. He coughed from the moment he opened his eyes, coughed for no less than a solid hour, gasping for breath, hawking and spitting his head off, and all the time there was a rattling in his throat and a whistling and a wheezing in his chest like an old organ gone bad.

After that he sat around the rest of the day leaning his shoulder on his leather-padded Y-shaped crutch — a raw-boned gaunt man with an elongated hooked nose, once large and fleshy but now so sharp that it could have been used as a paper-cutter to slit the leaves of a book, with sunken cheeks covered by a stiff gray stubble, with faded yet piercing eyes under thick bushy eyebrows, with enormous straight fierce moustaches which, retaining all their pristine magnificance beneath his nostrils, gradually tapered out to the extremely springy thinness of single hairs licking out on either side like spears. And he sat there on his cot, or shifted to the threshold of his hut, or moved on outside to a chock hard by the shed, bent over his crutch, bossing everybody around, telling everybody off, sharply, menacingly, by fits and starts, coughing and gasping for breath so desperately that the rattling and whistling and wheezing could be heard throughout the length and breadth of Shanghai.*

When a man loses over half his capacity to work while still not very old, and then completely sinks into such a state as this—let him try and raise, teach a profession to, and send out into the world a brood of eleven: three lads and eight lasses!

And it would hardly have lain within Gabriel Tyulenin's power to do so, had it not been for Alexandra, his wife, a strong woman of Orel peasant stock—whose females the folk of old Russia dubbed *boi-baba,* babbling fire-eating viragoes. A real *Berthe aux grands pieds* type, she was still vigorous beyond every shadow of doubt and had never known a day's illness. It's true she also didn't know how to read and write, but she could as occasion demanded be grimly stubborn or sly, she could wag her tongue or hold it still, she could be malevolent or kind, cajoling or pert or biting, and if anybody out of sheer ignorance provoked her to a quarrel, that person very quickly learned he had taken the wrong sow by the ear.

And so ten of the offspring were out making their way in the world, while Serezhka, the youngest, although he attended school, grew like the grass on the prairie. He didn't know what it meant to be shod and clothed in his own right—everything he had on was a hand-down, cut and recut ten times over; he had been tempered by all manner of suns and winds and rains and frosts; the skin on his feet was thick and padded like a camel's; and no matter what injuries and wounds he suffered, they all healed over in a twinkling as though he were some veritable *bogatyr,* some fabulous Russian knight of old.

HIS father, who rattled and whistled and wheezed at him more than at any of his other progeny, also loved him more than any of the others.

"What a rascal, eh?" he would say, withal in a satisfied tone, stroking those fierce moustaches of his. "Ain't that so, Shurka?" — Shurka being what he called his sixty-year-old partner and friend of a lifetime, his wife Alexandra. "Take a look at him, hey. Ain't afraid to fight anybody. Just like me when I was a kid." Cough-cough-cough-ugh-ugh. . . . And he was off again, hacking and wheezing away so hard as to leave himself in a state of stupefaction.

You have the heart of a lion, yet you are still a youngster, you are badly dressed, and the skin on your feet is

* Part of the town of Krasnodon, called Shanghai by the inhabitants because the first of a number of little huts was built by a Chinese.—Trans.

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rough and chapped. What would you do, reader? Of course, first of all you would perform some great exploit? But who doesn't dream of great exploits in childhood? — yet somehow they don't always come off.

If you are a schoolboy in the fourth grade, and during the arithmetic lesson you fetch some sparrows out of your desk and turn them loose, that may not bring you glory. The principal—for the umpteenth time!—summons your parents, that is, Mama Shurka, aged sixty, Grandpa Gabriel (following the happy-go-lucky example of their mother all his children called him Grandpa) is raging mad, and rattles and wheezes away, and is just itching to cuff you over the head, but he can't get at you, and only bangs away with his crutch, which he can't even let fly at you because it has to support his wizened body. But Mama Shurka, after she comes back from school, gets busy on you with a vengeance and gives your ears such an honest-to-goodness boxing that your cheeks flame and your ears ring for days on end after that—the passing years only seem to add strength to Mama Shurka's arms.

And your comrades? Huh—some comrades! No wonder people speak about "the bubble reputation." The very next day your exploit with the sparrows is forgotten.

In your free time during the summer you can achieve a degree of tan blacker than anybody else's, you can learn to dive and swim better than anybody else, and you are more dexterous at catching young pickerel with your bare hands under the thick branches of trees fallen into the river. You can engineer a feat like this too: upon spying a flock of girls hopping and skipping along the bank, you can take a swift running start on shore and with a mighty lunge shove off from the steep bank in a graceful swallow dive, your brown body cutting the water like a knife, and you plunge deep down, and at the moment when the girls are pretending complete indifference but are watching with growing curiosity to see when you'll rise to the surface, under the water you slip off your shorts and suddenly come floating with a plop to the surface, your backside sticking up, your ruddy glowing backside being the only part of your body which has not been touched by the sun! . . .

You experience a momentary sense of keen satisfaction when you see the twinkling pink heels and wildly fluttering dresses of the girls who literally tear head over heels from that bank in a mad scramble to get away. You carelessly accept the acclamations of delight expressed by the rest of the fellows who are lolling about on the sand taking a sun bath. You have for all time won the undying admiration of the urchins, who hereafter will dog your footsteps in droves, imitate you in every way, and implicitly obey your every word, the mere crook of your finger. The times of the Roman Caesars have long since passed, yet the little boys idolize you.

But of course that's not enough for you. And so one fine day, seemingly no different from any other day of your life, you suddenly jump out of the second-story window at school right square into the yard where all the youngsters are busy as usual innocently playing their games during the recess period. In the space of time that it takes you to travel through the air—a single short instant that passes like a flash—you tingle with a sheer piercing delight that knows no bounds. It surges through you with the novel sensation of flight: it is heightened by the wild fearful shriek emitted by all the girls —every last one of them, from the first to the tenth grade—the shrieks also prompted by an avid desire to attract the attention of the whole world to themselves on any and every occasion.

What follows would be better veiled —nothing but bleak disillusionment, nothing but sackcloth and ashes.

The conversation with the principal is a very trying one. The point in question is obviously your expulsion from school. You are forced to be churlish

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with the principal because you are in the wrong. For the first time the principal himself decides to pay a visit to Shanghai to see your parents.

"I want to see for myself under what conditions this boy lives. I want to find out what in the world is the cause of all this," he says, as importantly and politely as a foreigner. And in his voice there is a note of reproach levelled at your parents.

And your parents—your mother, with her soft round hands which she doesn't know how to hide because she has only just been dragging the big cast-iron pots out of the stove and her hands are black with soot, and she isn't even wearing an apron to wipe her hands on. And your father, absolutely flabbergasted, leaning heavily on his crutch tries to struggle to his feet in the presence of the principal—your folks look at the principal as though they really are to blame for everything.

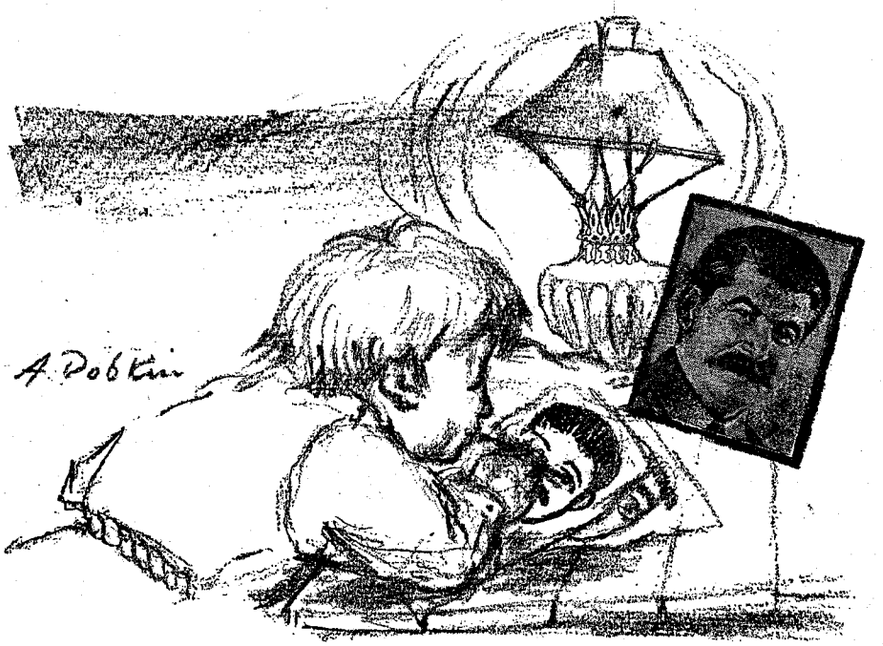
When the principal leaves, at first nobody swears at you, as though not a soul wants to have a thing to do with you. Grandpa sits there without looking at you, only hacking away once in a while, and his moustaches are not so fierce after all, but pretty droopy, like the moustaches of a man who's been knocked about a plenty in his lifetime. And your mother bustles through the house, scraping her feet along the earthen floor, fussing a bit here, a bit there, and all of a sudden you see her bending over the Russian stove and stealthily brushing away the tears with that soot-blackened, old, round, beautiful hand of hers. And with their whole beings your old mother and father seem to be saying to you:

"Yes, you, take a good look at us, you; look at us good and hard, see who we are, what we are!"

And for the first time you realize that it's been mighty long since your old folks have had a decent thing to wear when holidays come around. And almost all their lives they haven't eaten together with the kids at the same table —they've eaten separately where they couldn't be seen, because they don't give themselves anything but potatoes and black bread and buckwheat porridge, just so's the kids, every last one of them, could be put on their feet—so that now you, the youngest in the family, could have an education, could grow up and get to be somebody.

And your mother's tears scald your heart. And you see your father's face in a new light for the first time: he looks important, yet at the same time pathetic. And the fact that he rattles and wheezes is not at all funny—it's tragic.

Through quivering nostrils your sisters breathe wrath and scornful contempt when first one then another suddenly darts a glance at you over her knitting. And you are churlish with your parents, and churlish with your sisters, but at night you can't fall asleep, you feel deep resentment, and at the same time you are conscious of a gnawing sense of guilt. And noiselessly with your unwashed palm you wipe away two meager tears rolling down your hard bony cheeks.



And after that night you seem to have grown up. In the midst of a series of cheerless days marked by general silence and censure, a whole world of fabulous exploits suddenly opens up before your enraptured gaze.

Men travel twenty thousand leagues under the sea and discover new lands; they get washed up on the shores of distant uninhabited isles and build their lives anew with their own hands; they scale the highest peaks in the world; they even explore the valleys of the moon; they battle the fiercest storms at sea, clamber up the masts swaying in the wind and crawl out onto the top and into the crow's-nest; they steer their vessels over sharp reefs, emptying barrels of blubber over the raging waves; they cross the ocean on rafts, suffering excruciatingly from thirst, their parched swollen tongues rolling leaden bullets around in their mouths; they weather sandstorms in the desert, fight off boa constrictors, jaguars, crocodiles, lions and elephants, and lay them low. Men perform these exploits for profit, or to make their lives worth living, or because of their passion for adventure, or out of comradeship, true friendship, or to save a beloved maiden in distress, or else simply for the good of mankind, for the glory of their native land, so that the light of knowledge will forever shine on earth—Livingstone, Amundsen, Sedov, Nevelskoi.

And what exploits people perform on battlefields! Men have been warring for thousands of years, and thousands of people have fought the enemy heroically and covered themselves with eternal glory. It's just your luck — you had to be born at a time when there were no wars! You were born in a place where the grass grows gray over the common graves of men who laid down their lives that you might walk the earth happily, and up to the present day the fame of the captains of those great years rings out with undiminished vigor. Something virile and inspired, like a song sung on the march, swells in your breast, as, forgetting the late hour of night, you pursue the course

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of their lives through the pages of their biographies. You want to come back and pore over those lines again and again, to engrave the images of those men in your heart, and you draw their portraits—no! why say something that isn't so: with the aid of a piece of glass you copy their portraits on paper, and then you shade them in to the very best of your ability with a soft black pencil, moistening the point in order to get a darker and more positive picture, so that by the time you finish your tongue is all black and you can't even clean it with pumice stone. And those portraits hang on the wall over your bed to this very day.

The deeds and exploits of those men made the life of your generation secure and they remain fixed in the memory of man forever. And yet they were just such simple folk as you are. Michael Frunze, Klim Voroshilov, Sergo Orjonikidze, Sergei Kirov. . . . Sergei Tyulenin. . . . Yes, maybe even your name, the name of an ordinary YCL'er, would take its place side by side with theirs, if you could only manage to show the stuff you're made of. And as a matter of fact, how fascinating and extraordinary the lives of these men actually were! They knew all the ins and outs of secret revolutionary work as carried on during Czarist times. They were hunted down, thrown into prison, exiled to the North and to Siberia. But they escaped again and again, each time plunging back into the conflict. Sergo Orjonikidze escaped from exile. Michael Frunze escaped from exile twice. Stalin escaped from exile six times. At first they led only a few people, then hundreds, then hundreds of thousands, and then millions.

Sergei Tyulenin was born at a time when there was no need to carry on secret revolutionary work. He had no place to escape from, and no place to escape to. He jumped out of a second-story window at school, and that had been simply foolish, as he now saw clearly once and for all. And he led only one individual: Vitka Lukyanchenko.

But that did not necessarily mean you had to lose hope. The great ice sheets chaining the immense expanses of the Arctic Ocean crushed the hull of the Chelyushkin. And the cracking of that ship at night was a terrible thing—it was heard by a whole nation. But those on board did not perish: they landed on the ice. The whole world followed the train of events—would they be saved, or not? And they were saved! There are lion-hearted courageous people in this world. They are simple folk, just such as you. On their aircraft they fight their way through blizzards and cold to those in distress and bring the rescued back tied to the wings of their planes—they are the first Heroes of the Soviet Union.

Chkalov! He was just such a simple person as you are, but his praises ring out like a challenge in every corner of the world. The flight across the North Pole to America—a dream which had long fired the imagination of mankind! Chkalov. Gromov. And the Papanin quartette on the ice?

So life throbs on, full of dreams and of prosaic workaday doings.

Throughout the wide Soviet land, and in Krasnodon itself, there are people, simple people like you, cited for their exploits, surrounded by a blaze of glory—such people were formerly not even mentioned in books. Every person in the Donets Basin, and not only in the Donets Basin, knows the names of Nikita Izotov, Alexei Stakhanov. Every young Pioneer can tell you who Pasha Angelina is, and Peter Grivonos, and Makar Mazai. And everybody accords them merited honor. And Grandpa always asks you to read him the places in the paper where it tells about these people, and then for some reason or other he sits there rattling and wheezing away, until at last it dawns on you, and then you can see with half an eye what a bitter pill it is for him to swallow—to realize he's old, and what the mine car that hit him. . . . Yes, life certainly saddled him with some weight for one pair of shoulders to stagger under—him, Gabriel Tyulenin, Grandpa. And Serezhka understood then how hard it was for Grandpa to resign himself to the fact that he could no longer take his place side by side with these people.

The glory of these folk was genuine glory. But Serezhka was still little, he had to study. All this would come to him some time in the future, there, yonder, in adulthood. . . . Yet lo and behold! he was fully prepared to perform exploits like those of Chkalov and Gromov here and now—deep down in his heart he felt that he was fully prepared. But the trouble was that in all the world not another person could be found who understood this—not a single one. Of the entire human race he was alone in this conviction. And sometimes he even caught people shooting sidelong glances at him in a way which said as plain as the nose on your face: that frisky lad won't be picking my pocket next, will he?

THAT was what Serezhka was like when the war broke out. He made one attempt after another to enter a special military school—he simply had to become a flyer. But he was not accepted.

All the school kids turned out to work on the fields, but he, cut to the heart, went down the shaft. In a fortnight he was at the stope, hewing coal shoulder to shoulder with the men.

He himself did not realize how great was the respect he had won in the eyes of those around him. He came out of the cage at the pit-head as black as he could be, with only the whites of his eyes showing, and his small even white teeth glistening in that coal-black face. He walked together with the men, swaying just as solidly as they, and took his shower, snorting and hawking like his father, after which he unhurriedly made his way home—barefooted now: his boots were not his own—they belonged to the mine.

He returned home late, when everybody had eaten—he was fed separately. He was already a grown person, a man, a worker. His mother took the iron pot of borshch out of the stove and poured him a bowlful straight from the cavernous vessel which she held in both her round hands with a cloth. The steam curled heavily up from the soup, and the home-made wheat bread had never seemed to taste so good as it did now. Grandpa looked at his son, his faded yet piercing eyes flashing from under his bushy brows. He did not wheeze and cough, he talked quietly to his son, as to an equal fellow worker. Every detail interested the old man: how things were going in the mine, how much each man hewed. He asked about the tools, and about the work clothes. He spoke about seams and levels and drifts and crosscuts and stopes and winzes, like you would about the rooms and corners and closets in your own apartment. As a matter of fact the old man had worked every mine in the district, and when he could no longer get around, he kept abreast of what was doing through his comrades. He knew in what direction the coal was being worked and how the output fared, and,

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by tracing lines in the air with his long bony fingers, he could explain to any ready listener the position of the workings underground and everything that was going on down there, below the surface.

The following winter found Serezhka racing off straight from school to some friend or other without even stopping off at home for a bite. He was on his way to see a gunner, or a sapper, or a mine-layer, or a flyer, and toward midnight he would be home sitting up, his eyes sticky with sleep, doing his lessons. And at five o'clock in the morning he would be at the shooting range, where his latest sergeant-friend would teach the lad, together with his men, the fine points of handling the rifle and light machinegun. And in point of fact he came to be as good a shot as any of the regular recruits with the rifle and the light machinegun, the revolver and the mauser, the T-T automatic revolver and the Degtyarev *handly auto*, the Maxim gun and the PPS tommygun. Nor was he a whit less skillful in throwing the hand grenade and the fire bottle bombs; and he could dig himself in and plant a mine—or lay a whole minefield and demine a locality, with the best of them. And on top of all this he knew the make of every single aircraft put out by all the countries in the world; and there wasn't an unexploded airbomb going that he couldn't dispose of. Vitka Lukyanchenko learned all this together with him, for Serezhka dragged his friend along everywhere, and Vitka looked up to him in approximately the same way that Serezhka looked up to Sergo Orjonikidze or Sergei Kirov.

That spring he made one more attempt, a most desperate attempt, to get into a flying school—it was a place not for lads of his age, but a school for adults. And again he was turned down. They told him he was under age, and to "come around a year from now."

Yes, that was a terrible blow—and instead of attending a school for aviators he was busy throwing up defense fortifications on the approaches to Voroshilovgrad. But he firmly made up his mind not to go back home.

What dodges and shifts did he not resort to, in order to be enlisted in a military unit at the front! He did not disclose to Nadya even one-hundredth part of the artfulness and cunning he stooped to, the humiliation he suffered before he achieved his end. And now he knew a thing or two about fighting, about mortal fear, about death.

Rudy Bass.

portside patter

By BILL RICHARDS

The US denies that Admiral Byrd's expedition to the South Pole is a search for uranium. It is expected that the multimillion dollar expedition will:

1. Search for a permanent UN site.
2. Extend the Good Neighbor policy farther south.
3. Check possible sales of Kools to the penguins.
4. Investigate the use of igloos for veterans' housing.

Bilbo's illness may keep him from the opening of Congress. A number of his Senate colleagues have joined the doctor in advising him to stay home if he knows what's good for him.

The nation's progressives aren't nearly as interested in Bilbo's inflammation of the mouth as they are in his inflammation of the South.

●

President Truman held a press conference in a submarine while in Florida. The stunt was safe enough—all the reporters had those pens that write underwater.

●

The Rankin Committee will probably investigate them all for submersive activities.

●

Senator Ball is working on legislation modeled after the Case Bill to handle industrial disputes. Inevitably the measure will become known as the Ball and Chain Bill.

●

The AAF is advocating a merger of the Army and Navy. After all, two can make a "good will" tour as cheap as one.

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ANTIDOTE TO HOOVERISM

What about labor's allies? A discussion of the problems of political action today.

By A. B. MAGIL

LET's look at this America of ours after the beating we took on November 5. To see it in focus we have to view it as part of the world scene. This is where it gets to be puzzling. For the rest of the world and we seem to be walking off in different directions. The peoples of Europe, having finished with Nazism, are now busy sweeping out its offal and letting into their households the fresh air of a vigorous, youthful democracy. In Asia and Africa imprisoned millions are forcing open the door of nationhood and freedom. In Latin America the earth stirs with new political life and three Communists are lifted into the cabinet of Chile. And in the United States . . . the Republicans triumph.

The international aspect of our election may have been by-passed by the average citizen, but not by the Republican Party's chief ideological shaman, Herbert Hoover. "The whole world, including the United States," he said, "has been for years driving to the left on the totalitarian road of 'planned economy.' America is by this election the first country to repudiate this road. And it defines that the Republican Party is the party of the Right. . . . This decision of the United States will have a profound effect on nations which have been following along the road to the left."

The Republican Party is indeed the party of the Right—of the American Lavals and Chamberlains. But Hoover is merely whistling past a political graveyard when he reads into the election results a popular repudiation of that road on which in this country, as in others, labor and the masses of the people have found new strength and larger democracy. What the majority of the voters repudiated (in great part by staying at home) was the bungling and backsliding of a Truman administration which began as a shadow of the New Deal, but quickly became a shadow of the GOP.

As for the effect of the Republican victory on other nations, the nature of that effect may give little comfort to the surly sage of Palo Alto. Only the other day a newspaper headline indicated the response in that country whose government, though labeled "socialist," has worked most closely with American capitalist reaction: "*Laborites' Revolt Laid to U.S. Vote—Dissidents Said to See Return to Laissez-Faire and End of Liberalism.*" This is undoubtedly an oversimplified explanation of the growing movement within the Labor Party—and among the British people—against the Bevin-Byrnes-Vandenberg foreign policy, but it is certainly true that the GOP triumph has given great impetus to this movement. And it is not in England alone that the people are worried that the "profound effect" of November 5 may be translated even more explicitly than before into the language of dollar and atomic diplomacy.

Hoover and the other rugged reactionaries of Wall Street and points west hug the isolationist delusion that America can become a stagnant eddy around which the great pulsating tides that move mankind can be made to detour. But let no progressives succumb to this belief that a long nightmare of reaction is our inevitable lot. In working out the strategy of the future we must never forget that we are part of a world struggle and have powerful allies in many lands. And we must also never forget that, after the victory over fascism in history's mightiest war, this struggle develops in a situation in which, despite the temporary setback in the United States, the forces of progress and democracy on an international scale are advancing. For Marxists this is a period when the decline of capitalism is being accelerated, with the disproportionate economic might of America a major unstabilizing factor for the entire world capitalist setup.

LET me outline some of the problems and goals as I see them. Our objective should be to start building now a broad people's movement, a coalition of classes—workers, dirt farmers, small businessmen, professionals—of organized groups, and of all these with the Negro people. The recent Conference of Progressives is the nucleus of such a coalition, but it needs to be greatly extended to make it capable of developing around the issues of domestic and foreign policy a vast national effort culminating in a progressive victory in 1948. Certain it is that until there is a new people's party big business, which dominates in varying degree both major parties, will have an advantage such as it possesses in no other country. A mass breakaway from the old parties is vitally important for the political education of the American people and for most effective action. But those of us who favor such a party must face the fact that at present many progressives—probably a majority—don't agree. Since we want a mass party and not a sect, we must operate through organizational forms that will unite rather than divide the labor and progressive movement. This means today *independent* organization, with labor as its base, but not yet a separate party. At the same time it means an independent movement that will work with progressive elements in the Democratic and Republican parties (though in the latter case they are few and far between). This is essential both for the immediate future and for the eventual emergence of a new party.

One of the clearest examples of this unity between those who are ready to break with the old parties and those who are not was provided in the campaign in New York's Eighteenth Congressional District which resulted in the reelection of Rep. Vito Marcantonio. Marcantonio is one of the leaders of the American Labor Party and its sole representative in Congress. Yet though he received a substantial vote on the ALP line, he polled nearly twice as many on the Democratic line.

In other words, the majority of the voters of his district were united in wanting him to represent them in preference to the Republican candidate. They were, however, not united on the political party with which they wanted to identify themselves, approximately two-thirds of these voters choosing the Democratic Party even though

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Marcantonio himself is known as an ALP man.

This is not an argument against a new national party. It is an argument in favor of doing a great deal of work today—work that unites, builds and strengthens—in order to bring such a party to birth in the earliest future.

What are the chief weaknesses that need to be overcome if we are to prevent Hoover's dream from coming true? I believe they can be divided into three main categories: organizational, programatic, and political-ideological. The major organizational weakness is the division in the labor movement. Let us face up to the fact that for the first time in many years the Republicans made serious inroads among the organized workers. It is certain that this was facilitated by the split between the AFL and the CIO even where the AFL did not support reactionary candidates. While this breach cannot easily be closed, progressives cannot afford to neglect any possibility of narrowing it even if only temporarily. Systematic efforts need to be made to achieve, as a minimum, parallel action by the AFL, the CIO and the railroad brotherhoods on legislative matters and in elections. One of the main reasons why in Colorado the national trend was reversed, with the GOP losing ground, was that in Denver all three labor organizations supported the progressive Democratic candidate for Congress and throughout the state they backed the Democratic nominee for governor.

A second crucial organizational weakness is the absence of more than nominal ties between labor and the farmers. Except for the CIO United Farm Equipment and Metal Workers of America no trade union, as far as I know, has undertaken serious and consistent work among the farmers in behalf of common objectives. At the Chicago Conference of Progressives, which I reported on in the October 15 issue of NEW MASSES, James G. Patton, president of the National Farmers Union, challenged the labor movement to spend one dollar per member to combat the toxic anti-labor propaganda that big business is spreading among the farmers. The problem of linking labor and the working farmers of course involves much more than the question of counteracting tory drivel. The economic bust now growing within the boom will sweep through the countryside like a Kansas tornado and hundreds of thousands of farmers, now conservative-minded, will be groping toward a new political allegiance. If the progressives don't plow that soil, the fascists will.

The situation is not much better in regard to middle-class people in the cities. The fact that a number of small businessmen and professionals have identified themselves with progressive causes should not blind us to the fact that the bulk of these groups, as well as of the white-collar workers, are adrift, the favorite prey of reactionaries with their "free enterprise" nostrums. Whereas in 1936, 1940 and 1944 the majority of white-collar workers supported President Roosevelt, this year, according to the Gallup poll, the Republicans garnered 65 percent of the white-collar vote—almost as much as they polled among the farmers.

On this whole subject of the farmers and the city middle classes it is easy to fall into attitudes of complacence and fatalism. There is every reason to rejoice at the American Labor Party's showing on November 5, but let us not ignore the fact that after ten years the ALP is still a labor party in the narrow sense. If it had acquired even a modest following among the farmers and middle-class people of New York state, it could have polled a much higher vote and would be today a far greater factor for progress.

THE program of the coalition will have to be bolder and more comprehensive. By and large the tendency has been to limit the program to the Roosevelt Bill of Economic Rights and the defense of New Deal gains, plus various proposals of organized labor. All this is essential, but the gargantuan growth of monopoly during the war and the approach of a new depression both underline how urgent it is to take the key industries out of the hands of the buccaneering trusts and nationalize them under democratic controls. Moreover, the coalition program cannot enlist the support of labor's farm, middle-class and Negro allies unless it provides for each of these groups in concrete terms. The same holds for the youth.

Among political-ideological weaknesses let me mention these four: the hesitancy to criticize the Truman administration and to wage a vigorous fight against its reactionary policies—without, of course, detracting from the struggle against the Republican Party as the chief vehicle of Wall Street's assault on the people; the two-party fetishism which still afflicts the labor and progressive movement and is an aspect of the capitalist ideology that permeates it; the neglect of foreign policy and the slowness in challenging the bipartisan fraud that has been perpetrated on the American people; and concessions to Red-baiting on the part of many progressives.

On this last point we have lately been favored with a good deal of liberal sophistry which implies that the active participation of Communists in the labor movement and in the democratic coalition is normal and acceptable for every country but the United States. This, for all the glittering verbiage in which it is sometimes dressed, is only an echo of the reactionary Hoover isolationism. There is, in fact, no country in which the progressive forces can so ill afford any division in their ranks as here where reaction is strongest and least habituated to compromise. One of the prime lessons of the election is that the labor movement and all other progressive groups ought to resent and reject the efforts of the Rankins and Hoovers to interfere in their affairs. Another lesson is that while Red-baiting is a potent weapon, there is one that is even more potent: a united, aggressive fight for the people's interests. Witness the victories of Representatives Marcantonio and Adam Clayton Powell in New York and the near-victory in Milwaukee of Edmund V. Bobrowicz, who, despite his repudiation as a "Communist" by the Democratic organization, lost in a three-cornered contest by only about 4,000 votes—while his repudiators suffered far worse defeat.

It is by building strength wherever today there is weakness that the American people can reverse the verdict of November 5 and move forward in the battle to master their masters. It is my belief that in the course of that difficult battle we shall learn not only what can be achieved under the present system—achieved only through struggle—but also what cannot. We shall learn that freedom for all time from poverty, depression and war requires an entirely new economic foundation: socialism. We shall learn to measure the future not by our fears, but by the boundless dreams of man.

This is the second of two articles by Mr. Magil analyzing the election results. The first appeared last week.

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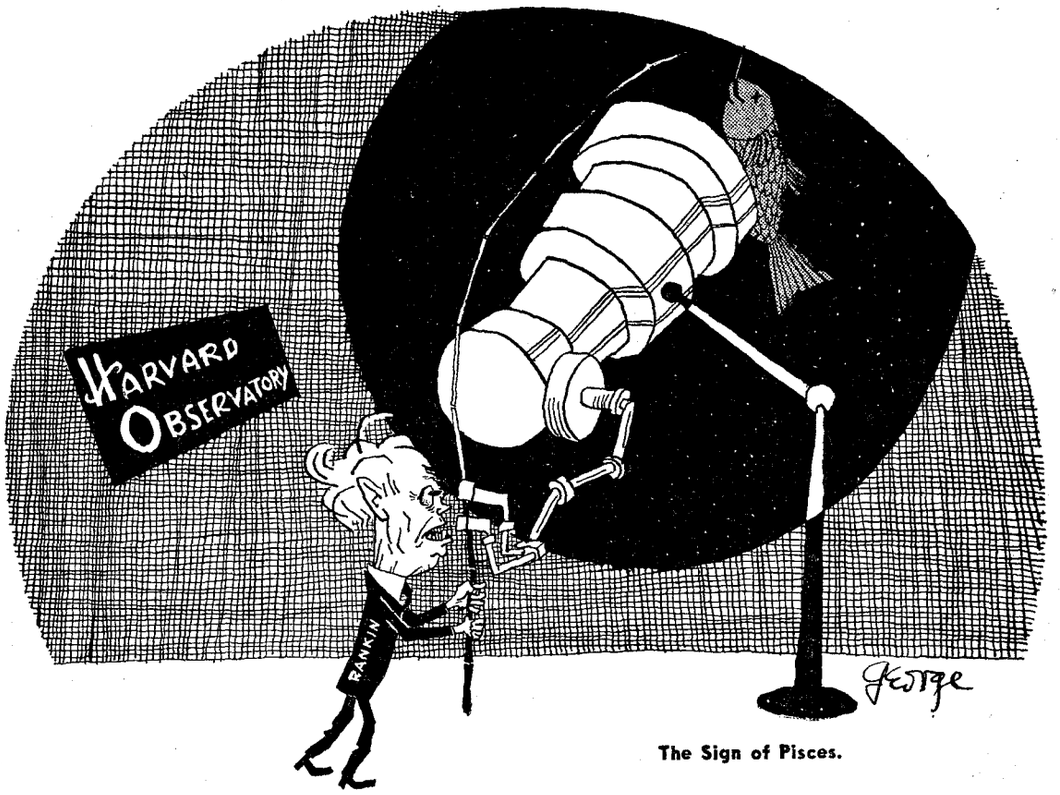

The Sign of Pisces.

ERNIE IS EAGER

While waiting for "Gypsy Lou" Budenz's encore, Adamson strips a subject down to fundamentals.

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

Washington.

FROM all the surface impressions you get of Ernie Adamson, attorney for the House un-American activities committee, you wouldn't think he was the elemental type. When he talks, his features seem to run together, and when he sits down his waistline appears to move up to his rib line, so that he seems short when he really is not. Nevertheless the inner man must be something quite different. Because once in a while Ernie comes up with one of those definitions which strip a puzzling subject down to its fundamentals.

This business about freedom of the press is a case in point. People like Senator Vandenberg and the Secretary of State, Jimmy Byrnes, are obsessed with the issue in certain European countries. Yet one and all they have failed to simplify it as Ernie has.

It was the week before the scheduled hearings co-starring Louis Budenz, currently being lionized by the fascists as the most recent renegade hitting the jackpot, and Frederick Woltman, FBI outlet on the New York *World-Telegram*. This was a repeat performance for Budenz, who appeared before the committee in the spring accompanied by a Notre Dame priest, although the committee was refusing to let such witnesses as Helen Bryan of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee be accompanied by their attorneys—as was the case when the noted astonomer, Harlow Shapley, was questioned by Rep. John Rankin recently. (The committee had to postpone the delight of hearing Woltman until later.)

"You know Mr. Woltman, of course?" I asked Mr. Adamson.

Mr. Adamson became even more heavily offhand than usual. "Oh, casually," he said. "I think I've met him, I can't be sure."

"You're not sure?"

"Oh, I'm sure I've met him," he answered. "We've shaken hands. We've said *how-do-you-do*. But I'm better acquainted with his newspaper articles."

They usually are enough for anyone, but I was surprised that they hadn't acted as a sort of bond in common between Mr. Adamson and Mr. Woltman and that both had not felt an irresistible attraction for the other which would bring them closer together. Perhaps Mr. Adamson sensed the surprise, because he began chatting about something else. My mind wandered for a minute, as the lulling sound of his Georgia accents went on. He was describing what an "education" the committee had been for him, and how much he had got out of talking philosophy and history with some members of the committee. In his morbid way I'm sure he has had fun.

Perhaps it was a foreboding that he may not last with the committee, despite his loyal work in behalf of the Republicans during the campaign in such little smearing jobs as he attempted on Prof. Shapley, but Adamson admitted that he was anxious for the committee to act, after the Budenz hearing, in recommending legislation. I don't know what the rush is. Possibly the recent hiring of Robert Stripling, the Dies committee stooge, is regarded

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as competition by Adamson. Possibly the Republicans want the report out before they formally take over Congress in January so that in the 1948 campaign the blame can be laid on the Democrats.

"Just what do you hope to get the committee to recommend?" I asked.

"That depends on what Mr. Budenz has to offer," he said archly. "But I do feel that the foreign agents' registration act is not being enforced, and the act itself needs strengthening before it can be. I feel, too, there must be closer supervision of publicity organs."

"That is, separate legislation to control the press—" I began.

"I wouldn't say control the press," Mr. Adamson broke in primly.

"But in line with Rep. Thomas' letter to the Attorney General, to take care of NEW MASSES and the *Daily Worker?*" I asked. Rep. J. Parnell Thomas, nee Feeney, the ruddy-cheeked Wall Street broker and insurance man who has such a passion for loading us Communists on boats ("shipping you back to Russia or Spain or France or wherever you came from,") recently suggested that second-class mailing privileges be taken away from NM and the *Daily Worker*.

"To tell you the truth," said Ernie, a favorite phrase of his and one that he pronounces with a momentous air, just as if you ordinarily did not expect the truth from him, "I haven't read that letter."

"WELL, aside from the letter, then, would this be legislation to take care of the NEW MASSES and the *Daily Worker?* Is that what you have in mind?"

"Substantially, yes, that is right," he said. Then he grew expansive. He began giving me the lowdown on how what he called "these publicity organs" work. They don't make any money themselves. So they become just sort of "collection agencies" or they have other organizations acting as collection agencies getting money for them to operate, while they put out "propaganda." A nice contempt edged his voice as he used the word.

His secretary stuck her head in the door long enough to say the United Press was calling. Earlier, she had announced that Mr. Sentner was calling, and Adamson, in a voice overflowing with the gratitude that he must feel for the Hearst communism "expert," David Sentner, agreed to meet him at lunch shortly.

When he had finished talking with the UP he went on with his definition. "Would you say that any paper or magazine which is not a profit-making enterprise is what you call a 'propaganda organ,' then?" I asked.

A hurt, misunderstood look came into those pale, watery blue eyes of Mr. Adamson's. It was almost as if he were accusing me of not wanting to understand. "No, I don't mean that," he said deliberately.

"Well, would you say the Chicago *Tribune* was a propaganda organ?"

"It prints some propaganda," he said guardedly, "and some news. I have even read some news in NEW MASSES," he added. "Not much, but some. In the ordinary course of things it is hard for a magazine not to print any news."

Mr. Adamson told me that Rep. Karl Mundt, South Dakota Republican, was being considered for chairman of the committee. But although he said politely that Mr. Mundt was a "very cultured man," it appeared to make him very happy when I pointed out that Mr. Mundt was on the Foreign Affairs Committee and, according to his secretary, would not want to give up that committee and possibly wouldn't want the un-American chairmanship. He became so happy, in fact, that I had to point out that she was speaking only off the cuff.

"Even if Mr. Mundt wanted it, however, how would they ever persuade Rep. Thomas to forego it, when he has the seniority and has made a career of Red-baiting, claiming he has been after the Communists ever since he entered politics after the last war?" I asked.

Mr. Adamson was evasive. "I don't think there will be much difference on the committee with the Republicans in," he said.

"Mr. Rankin will still run it, you mean?" I asked.

"Well, he will be the ranking Democrat," he replied.

"But you'll have more chance to get legislation through, won't you? Did you discuss any other legislation or plans with Mr. Rankin when you visited him down South?"

"Oh, just the committee work in general," said Adamson vaguely.

"Well," I said, for it is difficult to quarrel with Ernie for long at a time, his is such a happy nature, "I must be going."

"You haven't been to see me for a long time," Ernie chided me. "What's been the matter?"

This was a new experience for me, having Mr. Adamson apparently reluctant to see me go. Somehow it was not an unmixed delight. Mr. Sentner might like it, that confidential tone in the soft Georgia accents, but I didn't.

I KNOW WHERE I AM GOING

I know where I am going
Following the wind that is blowing now
Over snowy hills and crowded cities
Man is being born like the dawn rising now.

I awoke and colored joys were around me
I loved through you, through you came all my laughter
Through me, through me the wind is blowing now
Warmly from the folk with smiling faces
To the nakedness of those who are going hungry.

The air is harsh and keen
Blow free wind
I know where I am going.

CAHIT SAFFET IRGAT.

(Cahit Saffet Irgat is a young Turkish actor and poet of the working class. Two volumes of his work have appeared in his own country.)

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LERNER'S LITTLE LABOR LECTURES

An editorial by CHARLES HUMBOLDT

MAX LERNER is a man given to literary allusions. In the first of two articles in *PM*, published on November 19 and 20, dealing with the CIO convention at Atlantic City, he compared the Communists in the trade unions to the Old Man of the Sea in the Sinbad tale. They are not, says Mr. Lerner, "a danger, but they are a burden, a deterrent and a nuisance."

Reading Mr. Lerner's editorials, I thought not of literature but of what a French Partisan hero said to me while analyzing the tactics of another Maquis leader who had been captured by the Germans: "He made that mistake because he was scared. You can't be intelligent when you're scared."

For Mr. Lerner gives the impression of a man made obtuse through fright, obtuse to the point of complacency. Throughout the Roosevelt period he found himself in the position of a molder of other people's thoughts; now the liberal thinker is molded by circumstances over which he has little or no control. His role, that of the middle-of-the-road intellectual, a part which he believed he had created, is now written for him by outside forces and his own fears. And his reasonable voice here harmonizes with the gentle notes of the US Chamber of Commerce, whose warnings against "Communist infiltration" might be lifted out of, or placed into, Mr. Lerner's articles without the removal of a comma.

The Communists, says Mr. Lerner, have only a handful of adherents in the United States, because their solutions and tactics are alien to the native radical tradition. Nevertheless, due to cohesiveness, energy and militancy, they have won an influential place in the CIO.

That's good? No, that's bad. America, according to Mr. Lerner, being a middle-class country (sic), the CIO unions now become the objects of Red-baiting and American progressives take beatings in elections. Therefore, the Communists must be fought day after day on specific issues to win away from them the vast trade union membership, which in many cases has no other militant leadership to turn to. That's bad? No, that's good. Because the labor-liberal coalition which is supposed to rise out of the ashes of this civil war within the ranks of the working class, this phoenix, will carry in its beak glad tidings of another New Deal!

This is gratuitous dilettante advice to a working class which must prepare for giant battles where it will require the loyal solidarity of all its members, from the least developed to the most class conscious and courageous of all, the Communist workers. Mr. Lerner proposes that the working class forsake its militant greatness to indulge in a futile squabble over the issue of communism in order to court favor with the middle class on a false basis, by perpetuating the illusions and prejudices which the latter derives from the bourgeoisie. It is a legitimate point, no *reductio ad absurdum*, to suggest that Mr. Lerner might just as well call for the persuasive (Mr. Lerner is never violent, everything is to be done by voting) deportation of the Jews because of the prevalence of anti-Semitism.

Mr. Lerner is apt with bad examples. He wants us to "rethink the whole basis of progressive political action." We can learn something, he says, from the experience of Britain where a Labor government has come into power with the support of the liberal middle class. Well, there are at least two lessons to be learned from Great Britain. One is that a coalition of labor, the farmers and the middle class is indispensable if we are to stem the assault of imperialism. The other is too bitterly learned for Mr. Lerner to call attention to it. It is that when labor permits men like Bevin and Attlee to shine the shoes of the ruling class in its name, then it must bear the heavy shame of Greece, of Spain, of India and Africa. When it allows its representatives to thirst for knighthood and the amused approval of its enemies, then it must be prepared to see such leaders betray its dreams of a decent life, its living dream of socialism. The so-called anti-communism policy which took Chamberlain to Munich brought Churchill to Fulton—with Bevin at his heels.

IT WOULD be interesting to know what "specific issues" must be fought out to expose the burdensome character of Communist interference in them. While Mr. Lerner wept over Spain, thousands of American Communists died for her. An American Communist leader has won the Distinguished Service Cross in the anti-fascist war. Does Mr. Lerner disapprove? Does he object to the denazification of Germany, the liberation of the colonial peoples, friendship with the Soviet Union, an end to the stockpiling of atomic bombs, price control, higher wages, adequate housing, a stop to military aid for Chiang Kai-shek, death for lynchers? Will he deny that Communists fight for all of these things and many more that Mr. Lerner would give his philosophical blessing to? Will he dare say that Communists have ever disrupted a single local of any union in the CIO, which they helped build with their effort and their blood? (I speak of the CIO only here, because Mr. Lerner's tears are dropping most piously on that body at the moment.)

No, what worries Mr. Lerner is something else. It is not the deeds of Communists but the principle that guides them which he cannot bear. Professional mourner over the evils of capitalism, he bewails the work of its gravediggers. What a blow to his occupation if the American working class should come to know its capitalist enemy for the rank, rotting thing that it is, to see its face, study its structure, measure its strength, and then defeat it forever! What if our workers and farmers, professionals and shopkeepers, all victims of the greed of their exploiters, should understand what socialism would do for them, and if they learned what they must do to achieve it!

The Communists, serving the working class, serve all humanity. They warn against trusting those who propose divisions within labor's ranks in order to "purify" it, who sympathize with its sufferings but do not want to see it strong. They urge a united front of all forces desiring to resist the cold assault of the ruling class. They know, as much as anyone, how dreadful fascism can be, but they are not frightened into concession and surrender at the first signs of it. Let Mr. Lerner stop lecturing the working class and find out whose side he is on.

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review and comment

ANATOMY OF CONSCIENCE

Robert Coates and Charles Jackson revive themes of guilt and doom in an uneasy peace.

By WALTER McELROY

THE BITTER SEASON, *by Robert M. Coates. Harcourt, Brace.* $2.50.
THE FALL OF VALOR, *by Charles Jackson. Rinehart.* $2.75.

"THERE was my guilt at having permitted the war to come at all—because there was no avoiding or evading the fact that I was responsible, just as much as anyone else—and before that, the greater guilt of allowing the world to degenerate to a point where wars could still happen." So Robert M. Coates expresses—in the words of his "very worried little man walking up Lexington Avenue in a brown overcoat and a gray hat . . . his keen eyes quick to observe the vagaries of the humankind around him"—that uneasy mood of self-questioning which is the theme of both these novels.

The books about war at the front have been following each other off the presses at close intervals; but until now we have had few accounts by our novelists about the war's impact on what was called the "home front." Here are two novels which probe with surgical precision into that dark and conscience-ridden mood of so many middle-class intellectuals in the war's latter stage—a mood which is still widely felt, perhaps. Restlessness, loneliness, despair: the emotions of the characters in both books—middle-class New York intellectuals in early middle age—all add up to what Coates calls a "basic emotional constant . . . one of just plain guilt." Or as Charles Jackson puts it, analyzing his hero's feelings: "In the back of his mind lay a vague and fearful uncertainty, a reminder of doom. . . . He attributed it to the war. Everywhere in the world the blow was falling."

Guilt and doom—these were the themes of classical tragedy, in which the hero's downfall followed swiftly his discovery of his own wrongdoing. In our time—ever since the fall of France in 1940—the tragic formula has seemed to middle-class intellectuals throughout the world to be increasingly applicable not merely to individuals, but to whole groups and classes and even nations.

Now as we face an insecure and uneasy peace, these themes of guilt and doom appear likely to occur more often in writing that aims at serious understanding of reality. For many writers, the best mode of expression for them will no doubt seem to be that of classical tragedy, as it has seemed to be for Charles Jackson—and rightly, I think, for it suits his level of understanding. Only from writers whose understanding goes deeper, goes deep enough to discern some hope for the future (and how can such hope arise except out of confidence in a program of active resistance to present evils?), are we apt to get writing which surmounts, without falsification, the mood of tragic despair. To me, the great importance of Robert Coates' book is its revelation of such deeper understanding, which determines—and again, I think, rightly—his choice of a new and very different mode of expression.

The emotional tone of both these novels is one felt most keenly, through the long dark months of that last year before the landings in Normandy with which both novels deal, by men who were too old or too frail to be soldiers. Both Coates' and Jackson's heroes belong in this group: one a writer, the other a university instructor and writer, both just beyond the age limit for military service. And both, under the pressure of their sense of guilt, are driven to examine their whole past lives—and most of all, the marriage relationships on which their lives have been built. The upshot of the examination, in each case, is to destroy not only the marriage relationship, but to bring tumbling down like a house of cards the whole system of values by which each has lived. In both novels, the break-up of a marriage comes to symbolize the war's destruction of a whole past way of life for many of the more sensitive members of the middle class.

BEYOND these parallelisms of theme, milieu and characters, the two novels diverge widely. In form, as in meaning, they diverge toward opposite poles.

Jackson's hero, like the hero of his first novel, *The Lost Weekend*, is doomed to tragedy by his own progress toward self-knowledge. What he discovers in himself is the revelation faced finally by another ageing and lonely hero contemplating his past life by the seaside: the hero of Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*. John Grandin's journey toward the understanding of his own latent homosexuality moves ahead inexorably; and indeed, the very form of Jackson's novel is tightly patterned on the classical unities: it has a "Beginning," a "Middle" and an "End."

The achievement of that tragic significance at which Jackson is aiming rests, of course, on our acceptance of the inevitability of this march toward doom (just as the overwhelming ma-

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jority of contemporary novels, plays, even movies depend for effect on their ability to persuade the audience to abandon its self-identity and accept an illusion). Jackson has fashioned his novel on the prevailing pattern with great competence. And yet I think it fails to achieve a sense of genuine tragedy. One feels that Jackson's very consciousness of dealing with an "unspeakable" subject has influenced him to present it in such form that his middle-class (and presumably prejudiced) readers will find it acceptable. It is for this reason, one feels, he has made his hero an eminently respectable and unsuspecting paragon of middle-class attainments, to whom the discovery of evil comes as a cruel surprise. But the very lack of any community of understanding on the matter between writer and readers strains the plausibility of such a device. One asks: is it plausible that a presumably sophisticated man should have reached the age of forty-six without the least premonition of such a discovery? Thus the sense of inevitability—and with it, the sense of tragedy—is shaken.

Coates' approach is diametrically opposed. *The Bitter Season* never attempts to persuade the reader to forget himself, to merge his own destiny with the hero's. It scarcely even pretends to be a novel at all, but rather presents itself in the disarming guide of a personal document (disarming because of course, like the somewhat similar novels of Christopher Isherwood, it is not that at all). It is not, in other words, a naturalistic novel. Instead we have an experimental mixture of narrative, diary or journal, prose poem and philosophic disquisition. The tradition is an old one: that of the eighteenth-century novelist, of Sterne or Fielding, who thought it quite proper that the author should appear, along with his own creatures, his characters, to comment on their action. But this old tradition is brought brilliantly up to date, in the light of such experiments as Proust's and Isherwood's and Virginia Woolf's. What we get is a seemingly casual (but in fact, altogether artful) free fantasia on themes of common experience. Coates has based his novel on a series of more or less narrative sections—"The Months: One" and "Two," "Three," "Four" and "Five"—in roughly chronological progression but wandering freely from present to past and back again, with occasional passages of unabashed philosophic comment; and these are interspersed with poetic (but not offensively so) interludes, handling such material as newspaper headlines, newsreel shots, snatches of conversation. The reader (or this reader, at least), perhaps just because he does not face the usual onslaught on his independence, is free to think and feel in the light of his own remembered experience. The result (again for me, at least) is an infinitely heightened sense of reality.

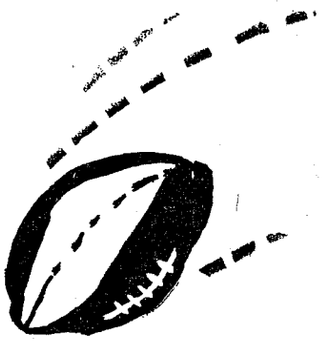
What Coates says, or has his hero say, of his own method is much to the point: ". . . The plot, I suppose, is as real as the things that happened to many another man, in that time, and that period." Real or unreal, one is not disposed to question its plausibility, as one questions Jackson's plot; feeling free to accept or reject, one is more apt, perhaps, to accept. This is not the method by which to achieve a tragic effect; but this, obviously, is not the effect Coates has sought, and possibly the other and quite different effect he does plainly seek is as pertinent to us nowadays: ". . . there was a world within and a world without . . . but the two must be brought together, there must be contact somewhere, however fragile, or all the stories in the world, however excellently written, would count for nothing."

It is this sense of the interweaving of individual and social destiny—of self and world—which seems to me Coates' best achievement. And this, I think, may be as important as the achievement of that tragic sense of the individual hero's fate which the Greek dramatists—and most writers of our cultural epoch's decline—set out to reveal. It seems very important indeed when it can lead to a realization such as this: ". . . I'm coming more and more to agree . . . that your gloom or your optimism depends entirely on the extent of your confidence in the people."

War Stories

ACT OF FAITH and Other Stories, *by Irwin Shaw. Random House. $2.50.*

THERE are two stories in this latest collection by Irwin Shaw that represent the author's work as well as anything he has written. Both are about the war, as are all the pieces in the book. One is called "Gunner's Passage" and the other "Act of Faith." The first is among the finest stories of Americans in the war that I have read. It is tender and moving and deeply



felt. It captures and holds the feeling of men in movement during a war, and it examines and reflects these men with great accuracy and skill.

The other is more ambitious and less successful. It deals with anti-Semitism, in particular with a Jewish combat infantryman in France after the war, who receives a letter from home that makes him realize suddenly and poignantly that the war against fascism is not over, and that he will still have to fight when he gets home. The story is almost two stories: one the relationship between the soldier and his two non-Jewish friends, the other an extremely moving letter from the soldier's father, which is almost complete in itself. The letter, taken on its own terms, is successful. The relationship between the soldiers, which is the bone of the story, is not.

The reasons for the success in one part and the lack of complete success in the other are reflected in all of Shaw's work. In "Gunner's Passage" he treats soldiers in relation to the war as he formerly treated athletes in relation to sport. Politics are not involved, the stories are clear and fairly simple, and the important elements are accuracy and feeling. If a political truth is made, as it frequently is, it is made implicitly and often incidentally.

In the story "Act of Faith," as in an older story, "Sailor Off The Bremen," and his most recent play, "The Assassin," Shaw deals specifically with a political subject. The first is about anti-Semitism; the other two concern the handling of fascists by means of individual terrorism (these last two works illustrate a theme that runs through Shaw's entire work; he has always been interested in the brave individual who takes things into his own hands and makes a reckless, fool-

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hardy, even suicidal, yet magnificent stand against evil). All three of these works hit very hard, but they are all fundamentally unconvincing; their art suffers from the inadequacy of their politics.

I think the main reason for the failure of Shaw's more ambitious work is his inability to get above the viewpoint of the middle-class intellectual. In "Act of Faith," for example, he presents both problem and solution in that light. Consequently, although the problem is presented strongly, it is presented narrowly; and the solution is unsatisfactory, because such a viewpoint can never offer a satisfactory solution. The Jewish soldier, at the end of the story, realizes he must continue to fight fascism and knows he must rely on his friends for help; but Shaw presents this fight as something to be fought darkly, without plan, reason or organization, dependent for success solely on the worth of the individual.

Now there is no argument about the necessity for worthy individuals. But it was not simply individual bravery that won the war, but the *organization* of bravery. And among the leaders of that fight, the leaders of almost every resistance movement that lifted its head, have been the Communists; and the reason they were the leaders was not alone that they were brave, but that they could present a plan of group action that worked because it was based on theory.

Shaw does not seem interested in theory; he seems almost to have a contempt for it. This leads him not only into the obvious traps of anarchism when dealing with purely political subjects, but into subtler traps of romanticism, subjectivity, male chauvinism and a preoccupation with the intellectual as the center of the universe.

But he remains, despite these criticisms, a writer of enormous talent. He is no ivory towerist; he is alive and sensitive to what is happening in the world. He knows who the bad people are, even if he is sometimes screwy about the good people. He Red-baits occasionally, and while the Red-baiting is usually both gratuitous and defensive, still it weakens the rest of what he has to say. But the talent is there, and the capacity to move and be moved. Shaw is now working on his first novel. It is almost certain to be interesting and exciting. It could also be important.

WALTER BERNSTEIN.

Handel's Life

HANDEL, *by Herbert Weinstock. Knopf. $5.*

HERBERT WEINSTOCK'S *Handel* ranks high as a book about a musician, without entering the still higher category of illuminating criticism. Weinstock tells the story of Handel's life in a bright and readable style, yet based on full scholarly research and thankfully lacking in shallow witticisms. But the life of a great artist must be as well the life of his times, and of his grasp of its human, moral and social problems as his works reveal it.

The author presents very well the local color of Eighteenth Century England, but misses its inner movement. Thus he can say, "Anne reigned over an England not profoundly different from that of her great-grandfather, James I, a century earlier." Two successful middle-class revolutions had taken place during that century, however. An England still largely medieval had been transformed into one in which nobility and commoners both were convinced of the sacred right of investment and profit, and were embarking upon trade wars with France and the conquest of India and Canada.

The author describes the music learnedly, as well, without revealing its special character. It is not enough to say of Handel that he was "one of the most majestic, tender and human voices ever lifted in praise of life, of love, of beauty and of the art of music." What composer doesn't this description fit? Handel's special character was that he became wholeheartedly a composer to middle-class England. Weinstock himself says acutely, "Handel had long since freed himself, with varying results, from entire dependence on the shifting tempers of kingly and noble patrons. Now he took another step towards economic independence." Handel was the first great composer to throw off the feudal ties that still bound music and to enter the marketplace. When, in answer to the attacks of the tories, he made a similar step in his art, he raised his stature as a composer. He dropped the artificialities of an opera created in the Italian language for an English public and created the form of the Biblical oratorio, as contemporary in its symbolism as the English morality plays, and celebrating the victories of middle-class England. The music thus created was one of the most fruitful influences

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upon Beethoven's musical revolution.

Handel's career raises sharply the fascinating problems of the relation of an audience to a new art form, and the relation of new human problems to fresh art languages. Weinstock avoids such matters, although he provides a useful factual base upon which the reader familiar with Handel's music can spin his own theories.

S. FINKELSTEIN.

Soviet Trade

SOVIET FOREIGN TRADE, *by Alexander Baykov. Princeton University Press. $2.*

DR. BAYKOV has written an excellent little work on a subject with which he appears to be thoroughly familiar. Following the first chapter which briefly outlines the dominant features in the development of Russian foreign trade from 1803 to 1913, he skillfully traces the evolution and organization of the Soviet foreign trade system, employing a wealth of factual material from primary sources and presenting the data with an honesty and lack of bias which is all too frequently missing in the "specialists" on the Soviet Union. As the author has put it: "In discussion of the Soviet system of foreign trade I have tried to outline not only the main features, the machinery, and the development of the trade, but also to give a sense of the spirit of the system. Consequently I have used interpretations and explanations commonly accepted in Soviet literature on the subject as well as the point of view of Soviet authors and government leaders. Such generally accepted views and interpretations are here more important than personal opinions." Dr. Baykov has succeeded in his task.

The myth of Soviet "dumping" and "compulsory labor" is disposed of by the author, whose main thesis is that the Soviet Union requires a much greater volume and variety of imports than it actually receives and that should the United States extend reasonably satisfactory terms of trade and long-term credits (instead of the onerous conditions of trade previously imposed) mutually beneficial trade relations could be established.

A shortcoming of this book is the dryness of Dr. Baykov's language. But that is a minor consideration and is, perhaps, in some degree, unavoidable.

ALFRED DONSKY.

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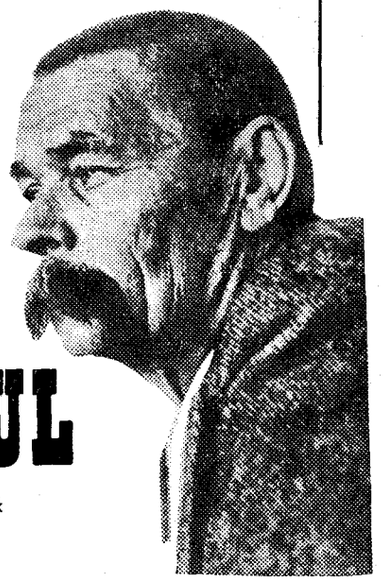

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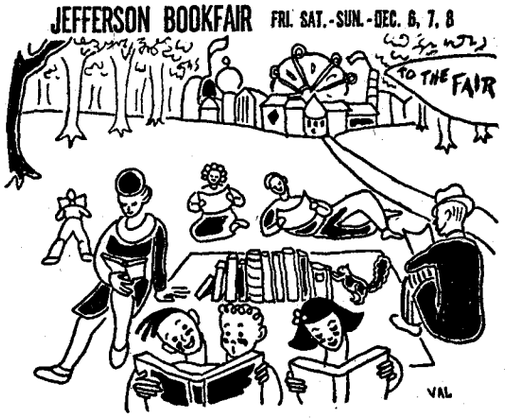

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sights and sounds

A PILGRIM AND A RAKE

Two movie heroes find life imperfect, but Hollywood and British films remain unshaken.

By JOSEPH FOSTER

WHEN I received my tickets for the unveiling of *The Razor's Edge*, Darryl Zanuck's gift to Twentieth Century-Fox, I knew that a great evening was in the offing. The tickets, a few inches short of a foot in length, handsomely designed in gilt and black, politely warned me not to be late and insisted quite firmly that the masters of Twentieth Century-Fox would prefer to see me in formal attire. Properly awed by this delicate blending of elegance and propriety, I discarded my customary red woolen cravat in favor of a blue bow tie.

The scene in the neighborhood of the Roxy Theater, where the deathless event was to take place, was impressive. The jampacked crowds were reminiscent of Times Square on election night. The more delirious of the spectators hung from window ledges and building signs with a contempt for gravity seldom in evidence since Pauline forsook her Perils. The lobby of the fortunate theater was a riot of pomp and glitter equalled only by the postwar debut of the Metropolitan Opera Company. When our leisure class goes in for culture it means to blot from memory a national shame that arises from our lack of ducal receptions and other such noble charivari.

Not being a representative of one of the puissant daily journals, I was given a seat under the eaves with other riffraff made up of poor relatives, friends of friends, movie company employes with very little influence, delegates from *Town Topics*, *Racing Form*, the corner store where the boss gets his cigars, and the like. Thus I cannot tell you what the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, numerous diplomatic figures and the wives of top executives were doing while the band, bathed in a soft blue light, played an accompaniment to a baritone who sang that someday his happy arms would hold someone.

Finally all the preliminaries were done with; the screen came down, the house darkened and a burst of tumultuous applause greeted the opening titles of the film itself.

No film deserves the handicap of such a fantastic introduction, having enough normal handicaps to begin with. But in this particular case you wonder what was behind all the frouing and frouncing. It is a little difficult to pick any single thread from the long and tedious meanderings of *Razor's Edge*, and I could be wrong in assuming that the producers had one central idea (aside from making a barrel of scratch) in launching this film. Yet what emerged was the simple and by no means original sermon that only a return to religion will bring peace and an end to the world's ills. The hero admits in the end that he is not sure this will do the trick, but that is, I suspect, merely an effort to disarm the cynics who are around in great numbers.

In Maugham's novel, which the film follows faithfully, the hero who rejects the values of his upper-class world wanders over the globe, trying to reconcile his awe of the unknown with his disbelief in God. He becomes a professional What-Is-Lifer. In India the swamis set him right, and he finally attains oneness with the Absolute.

In his disregard for the real world, where the exploitation of man by the rulers of men produces a whole scale of rotting values, Maugham can only give us a vague, pointless story. It is not surprising that the film, which substitutes shallower theological cliches for the original author's shallow Yogi philosophy, should be even more superficial in its unfolding. Where Maugham has no conclusion (how can he when he lacks even a premise?) the film comes up with sunbursts, organ music and cathedrals in the sky.

Zanuck and Lamar Trotti, who together or separately had a hand in the making of *The Ox-Bow Incident* and *Wilson*, and who publicly indicated what they thought of Betty Grable pictures, apparently wish to be taken as serious film producers. In selecting the Maugham novel for moviezation, this team certainly gave itself a hard nut. Short of scrapping the entire structure of the novel, which as serious movie makers they would hardly do, they could avoid a mere surface statement of religious feeling only by an honest exploration of the social values that drove our boy to hunt for a true meaning of life. But so serious they are not.

Some of the accidental by-products of the theme make for an interesting divergence from customary Hollywood morals. The film clearly indicates that life in the upper classes must be somewhat repulsive—otherwise why should a fine American lad run from it? Hence the mahouts of Biarritz, the Ritz bar and the Right Bank are animated by evil, snobbery, selfishness and pointless spending.

If *The Razor's Edge* has any value at all, it is as further proof that Hollywood can sometimes suggest an important theme but almost never do anything about it.

IF *The Razor's Edge* is the progress of a pilgrim, then *The Notorious Gentleman*, a British film at the Winter Garden, is the progress of a rake. Like the Zanuck opus, this film also has as its burden the effect of the bourgeois moral world upon one of the scions of its better classes. In each case the attempt to compress the hero with-

Irene Goldberg.

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in the prevalent social pattern before he has satisfied himself as to its meaning supplies the dramatic material. The British film is superior if only because it is less pretentious. It avoids symbols and vapid philosophic posturings in place of simple observable truths. It moves more slowly but drags less because it spends time on character detail; and a study of character is all-important in a film of this kind.

Not yet ready to settle down, as a scamp and campus prankster the rake-to-be presents a problem that the authorities make no effort to understand. The Empire, by gad, is built on solid virtues and there is no place for irregularities. He gets shipped off to a coffee plantation by his family (in the government, you know), in the hopes that he will find himself—that is, make his peace with the rules of British middle-class society. But the hypocrisy of his employer, who treats his help with callous and inhuman disregard while intoning pious sentiments, revolts him still further. Since the only society that he knows fails him, he expresses his defiance in drink, thievery and debauchery. As his moral dissolution proceeds, he makes love to his friend's wife, cheats and steals money from his own, preys on all his former associates and finally kills his father in an automobile accident. In an earlier period in history, problem sons were dispatched to fight the infidel and the heathen and to help carve out empires in India and Africa. But today the colonial service offers no cure for cynicism or despair. On the contrary, as the film shows, it is apt to deepen it.

However, the notorious gentleman cannot quite desert the old boy, the British Empire. In time-honored fashion he gets himself killed in the war, an act that apparently expiates all his sins. He ends up a hero, and as such vindicates the moral values of the society he repudiated. He was a good sort, the white-mustached Carstairs models in British officer tunics assure each other. There is no dissent from anybody, even his fellow rakes.

Rex Harrison, one of the ablest of British movie actors, succeeds as a man in flight from his environment where Tyrone Power, in a similar role in *Razor's Edge*, fails. Aside from comparative acting abilities, Harrison is convincing because he understands the meaning of his actions.

A LOOK AT ABSTRACT ART

A RESURGENCE of abstract and near-abstract painting at the outset of the gallery season, featuring such artists as Ad Reinhardt, Louis Schanker, Carl Holty, Kurt Roesch and Byron Browne, compels a discussion of some of the major issues opened up by this movement.

The early stage of cubism (the "analytical" period) multiplied the planes of the subject in a vigorous extension of Cezanne's late work. After much experimentation the cubists gradually flattened out their painting areas, set their shapes in larger relationships and returned to a lyrical contour (the "synthetic" period).

The cubists broke the subject up into a series of new relationships and recombined these elements into a simpler unity. A new plastic principle, the frontal picture plane, was established, replacing the former light and shade technique by the interpenetration of flat planes. Elements of this principle have existed in Oriental, Byzantine and early Italian art. It was reestablished in a new form by a synthesis of the varied directions paintings had reached at the turn of the century.

In order to uncover this important principle, the cubists used the still-life as the guinea pig, fearing more extensive subject matter as alloying material. *But there was no idea of eliminating the subject.* In fact, Braque to this day has devoted his time to still-life with the intimate attention of a Chardin. Roger de la Fresnaye succeeded in enlarging the human base of cubism before he died: witness his most important picture, *"Le Conquet de l'Air,"* owned by the Modern Museum. And certainly Picasso has welded all his discoveries to the humanist tradition.

It is important to rehash all this because most critics still confuse semi-abstract art with the non-objective variety (*i.e.* Mondrian or Kandinsky). Whereas some artists have used the new language to convey everyday images (Weber, Marin, Knaths, Stella, etc.), many painters took the elements of cubism as a means in itself and not as a new expression with which to extend the vision of our world. Thus the cult of non-objective painting, meaning precisely no subject, was developed. Here "pure" design is the objective, but an elaborately metaphysical rationale is introduced to fill the vacuum. I give a few typical quotes from their finest painter and chief theoretician, Piet Mondrian:

"In removing completely from the work all objects, the world is not separated from the spirit: but it is on the contrary put into a balanced opposition with the spirit, since the one and the other are purified." And again: "In abstract art, space determination and not space expression is the pure plastic way to express universal reality."

The words "pure" and "universal" recur most frequently in Mondrian's writing and the word "reality" is never given even an approximate definition.

Despite Mondrian's brand of metaphysics, it is unfortunate that some social painters have viewed all abstract art as outdated, particularly when several of them wear the pictorial trappings of the Barbizon school. No vital painter today can ignore the tremendous contribution made by abstract painting in the last thirty years. Is there an important scientist in any country who could work without the relevant discoveries uncovered in the preceding generation? If the painter after some experimentation discards some of the mechanical tricks, the dehumanized philosophy of abstract painting, he should still find important and vigorous means of pictorial design, newer and more dramatic use of space and shapes to enrich his subject matter. Otherwise he has less validity than Mondrian, who, within the framework of a private laboratory approach, did reassert the force of rectalinear space and had a cleansing effect in the field of applied art. The language of modern art has become rich, varied and complex enough to enlarge the visual concepts of our time and communicate our social and human philosophy with greater force and clarity. It is the trap of "purity" and "immunity" from the object that one should avoid. When the abstract painter will unlock this chastity belt and once more face the subject with the desire to interpret and transform it, he will return to the living plasma of the great traditions.

TO RETURN to our practitioners. Ad Reinhardt's work at the Betty Parsons Gallery embraces the non-ob-

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jective category with the inevitable loss of a certain intensity and agitation that characterized former work. He employs broad planary design tastefully executed but often too fragmentary in treatment. All his titles are named after the predominant color harmony. The "Yellow Variation" was richly painted and there was a very lyrical "Red and Green" gouache.

Kurt Roesch at the Buchholz weaves a continuous contour through his work somewhat like Braque. Fish, insects and sometimes human figures are caught in the network of lines. It is possible that, feeling his work to be mainly soft and decorative, he has turned to the "animal myth" of the surrealists to inject a weird note into his canvases.

Carl Holty at the Kootz Gallery has changed from his Miro-like forms to direct studies from nature, breaking the intrinsic realism of his subjects into multi-colored areas. It is a healthy change. There are hockey players, landscapes and several portraits of an old man. For all the color juxtaposition, the subject remains polite illustration. Abstract usage cannot transform a casual concept.

Byron Browne at the same gallery has also made a definite return to subject matter. Circus scenes and jazz players set the key. I think the subject has given Browne's work both depth and direction. Hitherto almost too versatile in his use of shapes and colors, his abstract studies tended to become over-involved, several pictorial motifs fighting it out in one and the same canvas. Subject matter has freed him from too intricate a maneuvering, from lapses into Picassoid forms, and given a large, monumental form to his best pictures. "Sword Swallower," "Trombone Solo" and "Young Man With a Horn" have entrancing color glazes (rare in abstract painting) and unusual textures to enliven the pictures' atmosphere. Here is one of our most gifted abstract painters.

Louis Schanker, another ceaseless experimenter, in his show at the Willard Gallery is practically an expressionist, using the hieroglyph as his form of drawing. Of late, color and texture inventions have taken such precedence in his work that they impart a glow of rubbed crayons to it. "Geometric Landscape" and "Yellow and Green Landscape" are truly creative interpretations of nature. Black lines are ribbed across the picture space like the lead in stained glass painting, breaking the separate compartments into strong color areas through which the scene slowly emerges. There is also a still-life that verges on impressionism, if one can imagine an abstraction reaching that stage.

All in all, there is plenty of evidence among some of our leading abstract men of a gradual return to the fertile field of humanism.

JOSEPH SOLMAN.

A NEW REPERTORY THEATER

FROM the evidence of its first three productions, Shakespeare's (?) *Henry VIII*, Barrie's *What Every Woman Knows* and Ibsen's *John Gabriel Borkman*, the American Repertory Theater promises much. The company, with its core of seasoned and talented actors, including Margaret Webster, Eva Le Gallienne, Walter Hampden, Victor Jory and Ernest Truex, plays excellently together; the direction is painstaking and intelligent; and the staging and settings are striking and effective. There are reasons for criticizing the selection of plays, but it must be admitted that these choices are free from any taint of box-office opportunism.

However, any judgment at this point must be provisional. A repertory performance is not a thing in itself, like the ordinary Broadway production; and a repertory theater cannot be judged, except provisionally, in its first season. A repertory theater is a growing organism that requires years to mature. Before definitive judgments may be made we will have to see what old plays the company favors and performs best, how it fosters new playwrights, develops new actors, sets new production techniques, affects public taste, alters audience-theater relationships, and so on.

All that can now be commented upon are tendencies disclosed in the first productions. Among these there is one that seems to me to have dangers. It is the tendency to build a repertory from the comparatively unknown and the infrequently shown; to conceive the function of a repertory

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theater to be the rescue of obscure plays from neglect. Two of the three first productions, *Henry VIII* and *John Gabriel Borkman*, seem to have been picked with that motive.

Henry VIII, as the American Repertory Theater does it, is something of a production miracle. Its confused and straggling chronicle is paced into continuous action by subtly organized scene changes and by substituting brief and dramatically staged readings from Holinshed's chronicles for cluttered and ineffectual scenes. Superb acting, particularly by Le Gallienne, Hampden and Jory, realize all the dramatic potentialities; and brilliant stage designing and costuming add a pageantry that holds and satisfies the eye.

But all this is spent on a play that is structurally weak and thematically insignificant, and which shows little comprehension in the author of the events he chronicles. The reign of Henry VIII reflects England's then new position as makeweight on the European balance of power. The two great continental states, France and Spain, courted England; and Henry VIII shrewdly held to a position in which the courtship would go on at his discretion. In the similar struggle between the Papacy and the Reformation, Henry VIII got what he could with the consent of the Pope or, when necessary, against the Pope's will, absorbing Church prerogatives and property into the Crown, as did other "Protestant" princes. All this was done to pleasing propaganda tunes of English patriotism. With so much political change and international intrigue to attract the ambitious, English political life in that age was marked by opportunism, ruthlessness and treachery.

All this is confusedly reflected in the play. Whoever the dramatist was (Shakespeare's hand was in it only partially, if at all), he comprehended little of the situation and was moved by it only to commonplaces about the vanity of ambition and a final, patriotic apostrophe to the infant Queen Bess. Furthermore, there is little in *Henry VIII* of the magnificent poetry which makes listening to even the least of Shakespeare's plays a ravishing experience. With so much authentic Shakespeare still unheard in New York, the choice of *Henry VIII* is a puzzling one.

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John Gabriel Borkman to represent the greatest — by common consent —among modern dramatists. It is years since New York has seen Ibsen, and to have presented any one of his acknowledged masterpieces would have served sufficiently as a rescue from neglect. Yet the company chose a work from the period of Ibsen's decline.

Even in *John Gabriel Borkman,* however, Ibsen's search for an understanding of life and of the social relations of his time was deep and courageous. It gives a somber dignity to the play and it leads to insights that anticipate some psychological discoveries of the generation after him. But, with all this, the play fails for two reasons, which will become clearer from a synopsis of the narrative.

John Gabriel Borkman is a miner's son who has risen to power as a financier. To reach that position he has had to marry a woman whom he did not love and to make available her sister, the woman he did love, to the man whose influence he needed to attain power. But the woman whom he renounced, unable to love any other man, rejected Borkman's protector. And the latter, biding his time, avenged his wounded pride by exposing the illegal manipulations of Borkman at the moment when they might have brought him unchallengeable power.

When the play opens, Borkman has been living alone in the upper floor of his house for eight years after serving a five-year prison term. His grim and unforgiving wife occupies the lower floor and devotes herself to bringing up their son to the mission of redeeming the dishonored family name. The sister, to whom the house belongs and who has brought up the son in the first period of his life, arrives to ask the boy to come back to her. Her visit precipitates events through which these relationships are first revealed and ends in the liberation of the boy from his life-denying mission, the death of Borkman and the final and long-delayed union of the two sisters.

In Ibsen's great urge to reduce life to simple meanings the characters are virtually drained of personality and reduced to symbols. Mrs. Borkman becomes the symbol of bourgeois respectability; her sister becomes the symbol of love; the boy becomes the symbol of youthful adventure; and Borkman becomes a shifting symbol whose ambiguity keeps the play from

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being a whole structure, even in symbolic terms.

For this Ibsen's own unresolved attitude toward capitalism seems to be to blame. In his understanding of it, its inhumanity and its early creativeness appear to be in conflict, and so Borkman as a symbol is in conflict. At one point he appears as the incarnation of capitalist rapacity; at another as its poet, yearning, by the creative power of financial manipulation, to liberate the forces of nature. Borkman as a clear symbol might have united the whole, since it is around him that the other symbols must organize. Since its symbolic significance is unresolved the whole play is left unresolved. When Borkman dies, the spectator does not know whether to grieve or feel relieved. And the reconciliation of the two sisters has a point not in the logic of the situation, but in the incidental psychological overtones.

As usual in unclear art, *John Gabriel Borkman* was a strain to follow. Up to the disclosures that put the two women and the son in their symbolic places and brought Borkman to his waverings between his two niches, one was sustained by expectancy. Beyond that point there was merely neurotic tension, culminating in the rather gruesome union of the two women over the body of the dead man.

Barrie's *What Every Woman Knows* was by far the most satisfying of the three productions. Dealing with the problem of the woman who really makes the "self-made" man but must never be identified as the maker, it has much to say on several sides of the "woman question" and of the relations between men and women. It has its say, wittily and pointedly, in one of the most satisfying comedies of the modern theater. The production here, as in the other plays, was excellent, save in Miss Duprez's performance. As Anne Boleyn in *Henry VIII* her stiffness had not mattered, since so much of the play was pageantry. But here her role required a quickness and flexibility which she failed to bring to it.

What Every Woman Knows was a successful choice. The other two productions, particularly *John Gabriel Borkman*, seem to me clearly unsuitable, certainly at this point in the company's career. Later, perhaps, after the company is well established and has familiarized New York with the proved and most communicable area

PROGRAM

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of dramatic literature, it might experiment with plays from the periphery.

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MUSIC

THE works of Charles Ives are slowly getting performed, although not on radio, records or programs of major concert artists, where they could reach a proper public. There are not only no other American composers, but few composers of any country alive today, who combine an originality of idiom with a warm human content and grandeur of epic line, as this American genius does. His "Third Sonata for Violin and Piano" was played at Town Hall on Armistice Day by Madeleine Carabo and Carol Robinson. This sonata is to my mind his finest work in this form. The opening slow movement built up a feeling of spaciousness with the simplest means, reminding one of passages in the Bach "Chaconne." This was followed by a bright fantasy on barn dance themes. The concluding slow movement was built on grand polyphonic lines, and the hymn tune upon which the movement was based appeared in its closing bars with a simplicity and beauty that almost brought tears.

Also on the program were sonatas for violin and piano by Harold Cone and Roy Harris. The Cone work sounded similar to much music being written in America today by men who know everything about music except that it is an art involving the emotional and social life of human beings. Its structural ideas, neatly put together, came from all over the musical map. Only the slow movement, a passacaglia, touching in its melody and imaginative in its instrumental sound, was interesting. The Harris work had the individual melodic idiom and structural plan which have made this composer a noteworthy figure, but seemed to have little to say, and nothing that Harris hasn't said before.

S. FINKELSTEIN.

Records

ONE can do worse than to start a chamber music record collection with the three C Major String Quintets, written by Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert. The Budapest Quartet, having recorded the first and last, now presents the Beethoven work with Milton Katims as the added viola. It is not as concentrated music as the other two, coming as it does from Beethoven's early and most experimental period, and revealing a play with songful melodies and colorful effects which Beethoven discarded later on, except in such works as the Pastoral Symphony. It does show interestingly how Beethoven simplified Mozart's subtleties and opened the door to the sweet melodies and fanciful tone colors of the romanticists. (Columbia M 623.)

The Mozart Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra in E Flat, K 365, has a few surprises in its fast movements, and a slow movement that is beautiful and inspired from its first note to its last. The over-restrained but musicianly performance is by Vronsky and Babin, with Mitropoulos conducting. (Columbia M 628.)

The Robert Schumann "Spring" Symphony is not a profound and epic work, but is one of Schumann's few pieces of genuinely happy music, and one of the very enjoyable, lyrical minor works of the nineteenth century. The performance by Erich Leinsdorf, with the Cleveland Symphony, does not quite match the sumptuous tone of the bigger names in the orchestral field, but makes Schumann's melodies sing more convincingly than usual. (Columbia M 617.)

The Rachmaninoff songs are among his most beautiful works, suffering only because they are limited to a narrow realm of elegaic feeling, never happy and never quite tragic. The performance by Jennie Tourel is what one would expect from one of the most accomplished vocal artists of our time. (Columbia M 625.)

Another highly accomplished artist is the pianist Maryla Jonas, who plays a group of Chopin works with the sensuous tone and capricious rhythms of the old school of keyboard lions. Being herself a Pole, however, she does not let Chopin's Polish beat get away from her. The music, including three mazurkas, two waltzes, two nocturnes and a polonaise, is from the less familiar and rather minor Chopin. (Columbia M 626.)

Arrow records, a new name in the recording field, present one of the best of short children's pieces, Herbert Haufrecht's and Munro Leaf's "The Story of Ferdinand," in an unusually fine performance conducted by Charles Lichter. (AC 52.)

S. F.

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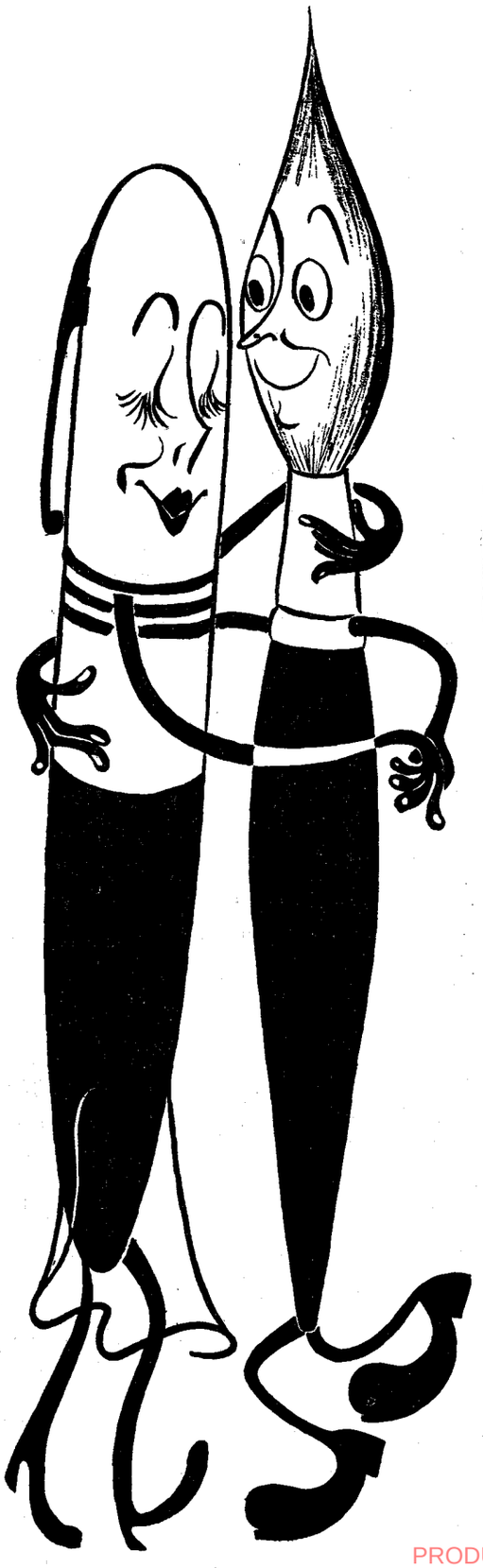

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